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FINAL 1987 TONOPAH WILDERNESS environmental impact statement

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FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

WILDERNESS RECOMMENDATIONS

for the

TONOPAH RESOURCE AREA

NEVADA

Prepared by

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

BATTLE MOUNTAIN DISTRICT

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Battle Mountain District Manager

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Nevada State Director

The proposed land use plan amendment contains wilderness recommendations on 483,050 acres of public land in northeastern Nye County, Nevada. The action responds to the mandate of Section 603 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 to review all public land roadless areas of 5,000 acres or more and roadless islands having wilderness characteristics; determine their suitability or nonsuitability for wilderness designation; and report these suitability recommendations to the President no later than October 21, 1991.

For further information contact: Mr. Leslie A. Monroe, Tonopah Resource Area manager at Building 102 Military Circle or P.O. Box 911, Tonopah, Nevada 89049 or call (702) 482-6214.

Date final statement was made available to the Environmental Protection Agency and the Public:

FEB 23 1987

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SUMMARY

The purpose of this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is to analyze the proposals to recommend suitable or nonsuitable eight Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) in the Tonopah Resource Area, Battle Mountain District for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System (NWPS). This EIS assesses the environmental consequences of managing all eight WSAs as wilderness, nonwilderness, and partial wilderness.

The eight WSAs being studied are listed below:

WSA Name	Number	Acreage
Kawich	NV-060-019	54,320
Rawhide Mountain	NV-060-059	64,360
Morey Peak	NV-060-190	20,120
Fandango	NV-060-191	40,940
Palisade Mesa	NV-060-142	99,550
The Wall	NV-060-163	38,000
South Reveille	NV-060-112	106,200
Blue Eagle	NV-060-158/199	59,560

ISSUES

The scoping process for the Tonopah Wilderness EIS encompassed issues identified by the BLM staff, by the public during formal scoping comment periods, at public meetings held in Tonopah and Reno (in June 1982), and from comments on the draft EIS by the public and by Federal, State and local agencies. During the scoping period, there was consultation with the Nevada State Historic Preservation Officer concerning the presence or absence of cultural resources in the WSAs that would be eligible for nomination for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service was consulted concerning the potential effects of wilderness designation on threatened or endangered species. The environmental issues identified for analysis in this EIS as a result of the scoping process include the following for all WSAs:

1. Impacts on Wilderness Values
2. Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use
3. Impacts on Development of Mineral Resources
4. Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction.

The following issues were analyzed for specific WSAs only:

Kawich WSA

Impacts on Mule Deer Populations.

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Morey and Fandango WSAs

Impacts on Mule Deer Populations.

South Reveille WSA

High Erosion Potential Watershed.

Summary of Alternatives and Conclusions

The alternatives assessed in this EIS include: (1) a No Wilderness Alternative for each WSA, (2) an All Wilderness Alternative for each WSA, and (3) a Partial Wilderness Alternative for each WSA.

KAWICH WSA NV-060-019)

Proposed Action (No Wilderness)

Under the proposed action, the entire 54,320 acres of the Kawich WSA would be recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation. Impacts anticipated from this action:

Wilderness values of size, naturalness, and outstanding opportunities for solitude would be lost.

Access for recreational ORV use would be improved and accelerated ORV use would occur, but would remain below 1,300 visits annually.

Areas of high potential for metallic minerals and moderate potential for oil and gas and geothermal resources would be available for development.

The maintenance of four miles of existing fence, Three miles of pipeline, and two spring developments for livestock management would continue. Livestock grazing use would continue.

About 9,620 acres of pinyon and juniper within the WSA would be thinned for browse re-establishment. The impact of mineral and energy exploration and development could reduce the mule deer population.

Alternative A (All Wilderness)

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the entire 54,320 acres of public land in the Kawich WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation.

Wilderness values would be slightly enhanced on all 54,320 acres of the Kawich WSA.

Recreational ORV use of 920 visits would be foregone annually. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

Development of areas of moderate potential for oil and gas and geothermal would be foregone. Development of precious metals would be foregone except for the three mines expected to meet all validity tests. These include: an underground mine at Eden Creek, about 109 acres in size; an open pit mine at Tobe Spring, about 20 acres in size; and a precious metals mine in the Breen Ranch area, about 5 acres in size.

Grazing facility maintenance of four miles of fence and two spring developments would not be affected. Grazing use would continue.

The manipulation (thinning) of 9,620 acres of mule deer habitat would be foregone. This would be offset by the elimination of most exploration and development of precious metals and oil and gas or geothermal resources within the WSA. The impact to mule deer populations would be a possible increase.

Alternative B (Partial Wilderness)

Under this alternative, 45,220 acres of the Kawich WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation and 9,600 acres would be recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

On the 45,220 acres designated as wilderness, all wilderness values would be maintained. The area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude would improve slightly because of the elimination of 500 visits of recreational ORV use annually. On the 9,600 acres not designated wilderness, there would be a slight reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitude because of continued recreational ORV use.

Recreational ORV use of 500 visits per year would be foregone on the 45,220 acres designated wilderness. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

On the 9,600 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness, recreational ORV use would continue to increase, but would not exceed 500 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

Development of areas of moderate potential for oil and gas and geothermal resources would be foregone on 45,220 acres within the WSA. Development of 2,560 acres with high potential for metallic minerals would be foregone except for the three mines expected to meet all validity tests. These include: an underground mine at Eden Creek, about 10 acres in size; an open pit mine at Tobe Spring, about 20 acres in size; and a precious metals mine in the Breen Ranch area, about 5 acres in size. All other areas of moderate potential for metallic resources and areas of low potential would be foregone on 45,220 acres recommended suitable.

Potential metallic mineral resources on 9,600 acres would be available for development.

Grazing facility maintenance of four miles of fence and two spring developments would not be affected. Grazing use would continue.

Nondesignation of 9,600 acres could result in a reduction of mule deer populations in that area due to increased ORV use and increased exploration and development of areas of good potential for metallic minerals.

Designation of 45,220 acres would benefit the mule deer population.

RAWHIDE MOUNTAIN WSA (NV-060-059)

Proposed Action (No Wilderness)

Under the proposed action, the entire 64,360 acres of the Rawhide Mountain WSA would be recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

Because of mining activities, the Rawhide Mountain WSA's wilderness values of size, naturalness, and outstanding opportunities for solitude would be lost.

Recreational ORV use would accelerate due to increased access up to 1,500 visits annually.

Areas of high and moderate potential for metallic minerals and moderate potential for oil and gas and geothermal resources would be available for development.

Maintenance of one spring development would not be affected. Proposed range improvements would be implemented. There is no impact to grazing facility maintenance or construction.

Alternative A (All Wilderness)

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the entire 64,360 acres of public land in the Rawhide Mountain WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation.

Wilderness values would be slightly enhanced on all 64,360 acres of the Rawhide Mountain WSA.

Recreational ORV use of 1,000 visits would be foregone annually. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

Areas of high and good potential for metallic minerals would be foregone except for two mines which are expected to meet all validity tests: an underground gold mine at Tybo Canyon, about 15 acres; and an open pit gold mine in the Little Rawhide Mountain area, about 50 acres.

The existing spring development would be maintained. A proposed well would not be developed in the WSA. This would affect access to water for cattle and would have some impact on grazing facility maintenance and construction.

Alternative B (Partial Wilderness)

About 41,960 acres of the Rawhide Mountain WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation and 22,400 acres would be recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

On the 41,960 designated naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude would improve slightly because of the elimination of recreational ORV use. The area's most spectacular scenery, naturalness, and opportunities for primitive recreation and solitude would be retained. On the 22,400 acres not designated wilderness, there would be a slight reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitude because of continued recreational ORV use.

Recreational ORV use would be foregone on the 41,960 acres designated wilderness and 800 visits would be foregone annually. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

On the 22,400 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness, recreational ORV use would continue to increase, but would not exceed 1,000 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

Development of most potential mineral resources would be foregone on 41,960 acres. Potential mineral resources on 22,400 acres would be available for mineral development.

On the 41,960 acres designated, grazing use would continue. Maintenance of three miles of pipeline would not be affected. The planned three miles of pipeline, four miles of fence, and a wall would be completed on the 22,400 acres not designated.

MOREY WSA (NV-060-191)

Proposed Action (Partial Wilderness)

Under the Proposed Action, 14,560 acres of the Morey WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation and 5,560 acres would be recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

On the 14,560 acres designated wilderness, all wilderness values would be maintained. The area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude would improve slightly because of the elimination of approximately 150 visits of recreational ORV use. The areas most spectacular scenery, naturalness, and opportunities for primitive recreation and solitude would be retained. The Bristlecone pine, bighorn sheep habitat, South Sixmile Canyon and the proposed National Natural Landmark areas would be protected from increased recreational ORV use and disturbance from mineral exploration. On the 5,560 acres not designated wilderness, there would be a slight reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitude because of continued recreational ORV use.

Recreational ORV use would be foregone on the 14,560 acres designated wilderness. The one mile of way within the designated area would remain open and 150 ORV visits would be expected annually.

On the 5,560 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness, recreational ORV use would increase but would not exceed 50 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

Development of potential mineral resources would be foregone on 14,560 acres. Potential mineral resources on 5,560 acres would be available for mineral development.

Grazing use would continue. Maintenance of two miles of pipeline would not be affected.

The manipulation of pinyon-juniper encroachment on 5,620 acres would be foregone within the 14,560 acres recommended suitable. Approximately 1,000 acres of mechanical manipulation of pinyon-juniper encroachment would be accomplished within the 5,560 acres recommended nonsuitable. The overall impact to mule deer populations would be beneficial.

Alternative A (All Wilderness)

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the entire 20,120 acres of Morey WSA would be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation.

There would be a slight improvement of the area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude because of the elimination of approximately 200 visits of recreational ORV.

Recreational ORV use of 200 visits annually would be foregone on the 20,120 acres designated wilderness. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

Development of areas of moderate potential for metallic minerals and moderate potential for oil and gas and geothermal resources would be foregone.

Grazing would continue. Maintenance of two miles of pipeline would not be affected. No new improvements are anticipated.

The overall impact of wilderness designation would be a beneficial effect on mule deer population.

Alternative B (Partial Wilderness)

Under this alternative, actions include combining the Morey WSA with the Fandango WSA by closing the South Sixmile Road, adjusting boundaries, and closing and rehabilitating cherrystem roads.

On the 46,300 acres designated wilderness, naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude would improve slightly because of the elimination of approximately 500 visits of recreational ORV use. The area's most spectacular scenery, naturalness, and opportunities for primitive recreation and solitude would be

retained. On the 14,760 acres not designated wilderness, there would be a slight reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitude because of continued recreational ORV use.

Recreational ORV use would be foregone on the 46,300 acres designated wilderness and 500 visits would be foregone annually. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

On the 14,760 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness, recreational ORV use would increase to about 1,000 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

Development of potential mineral resources would be foregone on 46,300 acres. Potential mineral resources on 14,760 acres would be available for mineral development.

There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and construction. Grazing would continue. Maintenance of the spring developments, pipelines, and fence would not be affected. One mile of pipeline would be completed and 3,500 acres of prescribed burning would be completed.

The overall impact of wilderness designation of 46,300 acres would be beneficial to mule deer population. Nondesignation of 14,760 acres would result in a reduction in mule deer population.

Alternative C (No Wilderness)

Under this Alternative, the 20,120 acre Morey WSA would be recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

There would be a slight reduction of the area's naturalness and opportunities for solitude because of accelerated recreational ORV use and mineral development.

There would be no impact on recreational ORV use. ORV use would increase but remain under 300 visits annually.

Areas of moderate potential for metallic minerals, oil and gas resources and geothermal resources would be available for development. There would be no impact on development of mineral resources.

There would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance and construction. Two miles of pipeline would be maintained. No new developments are anticipated.

The impact of mineral and energy exploration and development would reduce the mule deer population. There would be a reduction in the condition of the range offset slightly be vegetative manipulation.

FANDANGO (NV-060-190)

Proposed Action (Partial Wilderness)

Under the Proposed Action, 31,740 acres of the Fandango WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation and 9,200 acres would be recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

On the 31,740 acres designated wilderness naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude would reduce slightly because of approximately 500 visits of recreational ORV use. The area's most spectacular scenery, naturalness, and opportunities for primitive recreation and solitude would be retained. On the 9,200 acres not designated wilderness, there would be a slight reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitude because of increased recreational ORV use.

Recreational ORV use would be continue on the 31,740 acres designated wilderness and 500 visits would be expected annually.

On the 9,200 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness, recreational ORV use would increase to about 200 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

Development of potential mineral resources would be foregone on 31,740 acres. Potential mineral resources on 9,200 acres would be available for mineral development.

There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and construction. The spring developments, pipelines, and fence would be maintained. One mile of pipeline would be completed.

The overall impact of wilderness designation of 31,740 acres would be beneficial to mule deer population. Nondesignation of 9,200 acres would result in a reduction in mule deer population.

Alternative A (All Wilderness)

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the entire 40,940 acres of the Fandango WSA would be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation.

On 40,940 acres of the WSA, there would be a slight improvement of the area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude because of the elimination of approximately 700 visits of recreational ORV use. There would be a slight decrease in the area's naturalness opportunities for solitude on 1,900 acres in the Cow Canyon area of the WSA because of maintenance and the concentration of grazing facilities in the area.

Recreational ORV use would be foregone on the 40,940 acres designated wilderness and 700 visits would be foregone annually. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

Areas of moderate potential for metallic minerals and moderate potential for oil and gas geothermal resources would be foregone.

There would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance or construction. Two miles of fence, five miles of pipeline, and five spring developments would be maintained. One mile of pipeline would be constructed within the WSA.

Alternative B (Partial Wilderness)

Under this alternative, actions include combining the Morey WSA with the Fandango WSA by closing the South Sixmile Road, adjusting boundaries, and closing and rehabilitating cherrystem roads.

On the 46,300 acres designated wilderness, all wilderness values would be maintained. The area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude would improve slightly because of the elimination of approximately 500 visits of recreational ORV use. The area's most spectacular scenery, naturalness, and opportunities for primitive recreation and solitude would be retained. On the 14,760 acres not designated wilderness, there would be a slight reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitude because of increasing recreational ORV use.

Recreational ORV use would be foregone on the 46,300 acres designated wilderness and 500 visits would be foregone annually. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

On the 14,760 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness, recreational ORV use would increase to about 1,000 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

Development of potential mineral resources would be foregone on 46,760 acres. Potential mineral resources on 14,760 acres would be available for mineral development.

There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and construction. The five spring developments, seven miles of pipeline, and two miles of fence would be maintained. One mile of pipeline would be completed. About 3,500 acres of prescribed burning would be completed.

The overall impact of wilderness designation of 45,220 acres would be beneficial to mule deer population. Nondesignation of 9,600 acres would result in a reduction in mule deer population.

Alternative C (No Wilderness)

Under this alternative, the 40,940 acre Fandango WSA would be recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

On 40,940 acres of the WSA, there would be a slight reduction of the area's naturalness and opportunities for solitude because of accelerated recreational ORV use. In the Cow Canyon area of the WSA, there would be a moderate reduction of the area's naturalness and opportunities for solitude because of the concentration of maintenance activity in the area.

There would be no impact on recreational ORV use. ORV use would increase but not exceed 1,000 visits annually.

Areas of moderate potential for oil and gas resources and geothermal resources would be available for development. There would be no impact on development of mineral resources.

There would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance and construction. One mile of pipeline would be completed and approximately 1,500 acres of prescribed burning would be accomplished.

The impact of mineral and energy exploration and development would decrease the mule deer population in the foreseeable future.

PALASADE MESA WSA (NV-060-142/162)

Proposed Action (Partial Wilderness)

On the 66,110 acres designated wilderness, naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude would slightly reduce because of approximately 600 visits of recreational ORV use. The areas most spectacular scenery, naturalness, and opportunities for primitive recreation and solitude would be retained. On the 33,440 acres not designated wilderness, there would be a slight reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitide because of increasing recreational ORV use.

Recreational ORV use would remain the same on the 66,110 acres designated wilderness and 600 visits would be expected annually.

On the 33,440 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness, recreational ORV use would increase to about 600 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

Development of potential mineral resources would be foregone on 66,110 acres. Potential mineral resources on 33,440 acres would be available for mineral development.

There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and construction. The five spring developments and water impoundment would be maintained. Three miles of fence would be completed.

Alternative A (All Wilderness)

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the entire 99,550 acres of the Palisade Mesa WSA would be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation and all wilderness values would be protected by legislative mandate.

On 99,550 acres of the WSA, there would be a slight improvement of the area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude because of the elimination of approximately 500 visits annually of recreational ORV use.

Recreational ORV use would be foregone on the 99,550 acres designated wilderness and 600 visits would be foregone annually. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

Development of areas of moderate Potential for metallic minerals and moderate potential for oil and gas resources would be foregone.

There would be no impacts on grazing facility maintenance or construction. A water impoundment and five spring developments would be maintained. Three miles of fence would be completed.

Alternative B (Partial Wilderness)

Under this alternative, actions include combining the Palisade Mesa WSA with the The Wall WSA by closing the common boundary road, adjusting boundaries, and closing and rehabilitating cherrystem roads.

On the 113,870 acres designated wilderness, naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude would improve slightly because of the elimination of approximately 1,000 visits of recreational ORV use. The area's most spectacular scenery, naturalness, and opportunities for primitive recreation and solitude would be retained. On the 23,680 acres not designated wilderness, there would be a slight reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitude because of increased recreational ORV use.

Recreational ORV use would be foregone on the 113,870 acres designated wilderness and 1,000 visits would be foregone annually. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

On the 23,680 acre of the WSA not designated wilderness, recreational ORV use would increase to about 500 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

Development of potential mineral resources would be foregone on 113,870 acres. Potential mineral resources on 23,680 acres would be available for mineral development.

There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and construction. A water impoundment and spring development would be maintained. Three miles of fence would be completed.

Alternative C (No Wilderness)

Under the no wilderness alternative, the entire 99,550 acres of the Palisade Mesa WSA would be recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

The Palisade Mesa WSA's wilderness values of size, naturalness, and outstanding opportunities for solitude would not be lost.

There would be no significant impact on recreational ORV use. ORV use would remain below 600 visits annually.

Areas of moderate potential for metallic minerals and oil and gas resources would be available for development. There would be no impact on development of mineral resources in the Palisade Mesa WSA.

There would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance or construction in the Palisade Mesa WSA. A water impoundment and spring development would be maintained. Three miles of fence would be completed.

THE WALL WSA (NV-060-163)

Proposed Action (Partial Wilderness)

Under the Proposed Action, 30,320 acres of The Wall WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation and 7,680 acres would be recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

On the 30,320 acres designated wilderness, naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude would reduce slightly because of approximately 300 visits of recreational ORV use. The area's most spectacular scenery, naturalness, and opportunities for primitive recreation and solitude would be retained. On the 7,680 acres not designated wilderness, there would be a slight reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitide because of continued recreational ORV use.

Recreational ORV use would continue on the one mile of cherrystem road that would remain open on the 30,320 acres designated wilderness and 300 visits would be expected annually.

On the 7,680 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness, recreational ORV use would increase, but would not exceed 300 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and construction. One spring development and one mile of fence would be maintained.

Alternative A (All Wilderness)

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the entire 38,000 acres of The Wall WSA would be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation.

There would be a slight improvement of the area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude because of the elimination of approximately 250 visits of recreational ORV use on 38,000 acres annually.

Recreational ORV use would be foregone on the 38,000 acres designated wilderness and 250 visits would be foregone annually. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

There would be no impacts on grazing facility maintenance or construction.

Alternative B (Partial Wilderness)

Under this alternative, actions include combining the Palisade Mesa WSA with the The Wall WSA by closing the common boundary road, adjusting boundaries, and closing and rehabilitating cherrystem roads.

On the 113,870 acres designated wilderness, naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude would improve slightly because of the elimination of approximately 1,000 visits of recreational ORV use. The area's most spectacular scenery, naturalness, and opportunities for primitive recreation and solitude would be retained. On the 23,680 acres not designated wilderness, there would be a slight reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitude because of continued recreational ORV use.

Recreational ORV use would be foregone on the 113,870 acres designated wilderness and 1,000 visits would be foregone annually. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

On the 23,680 acre of the WSA not designated wilderness, recreational ORV use would increase, but would not exceed 500 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

Development of potential mineral resources would be foregone on 113,870 acres. Potential mineral resources on 23,680 acres would be available for mineral development.

There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and construction.

Alternative C (No Wilderness)

Under the no wilderness alternative, the entire 38,000 acres of The Wall WSA would be recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

The Wall WSA's wilderness values of size, naturalness, and outstanding opportunities for solitude would not be lost.

Although the area would be accessible, recreational ORV use would remain below 400 visits annually. There would be no significant impact on recreational ORV use.

There would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance or construction in The Wall WSA.

SOUTH REVEILLE WSA (NV-060-112)

Proposed Action (Partial Wilderness)

Under the Proposed Action, 33,000 acres of the South Reveille WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation and 73,200 acres would be recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

On the 33,000 acres designated wilderness, naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude would reduce slightly because of approximately 900 visits of recreational ORV use. The area's most spectacular scenery, naturalness, and opportunities for primitive recreation and solitude would be retained. On the 73,200 acres not designated wilderness, there would be a slight reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitide because of continued recreational ORV use.

Recreational ORV use would continue on the one mile of cherrystem road and one mile of way on the 33,000 acres designated wilderness and 995 visits would be expected annually. Recreational ORV use would continue on the one mile of cherrystem road and one mile of way within the area designated.

On the 73,200 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness, recreational ORV use would increase, but would not exceed 1,000 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

Development of potential mineral resources would be foregone on 33,000 acres. Potential mineral resources on 73,200 acres would be available for mineral development. One small precious metals mine and a small producing oil field is anticipated.

There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and construction. One water impoundment and five spring developments would be maintained. Two springs and a well could be developed.

Rainfall on poorly placed roads, cleared areas, and disturbed soil as a result of mineral exploration and development could cause soil erosion on these watersheds.

Alternative A (All Wilderness)

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the entire 106,200 acres of the South Reveille WSA would be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation.

On 106,200 acres of the WSA, there would be a slight improvement of the area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude because of the elimination of approximately 2,700 visits of recreational ORV use. There would be a slight decrease in the area's naturalness and opportunities for solitude in the Fang Ridge area of the WSA because of maintenance of concentrated grazing facilities in the area.

Recreational ORV use would be foregone on the 106,200 acres designated wilderness and 2,700 visits would be foregone annually. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

Development of areas of moderate potential for metallic minerals and moderate potential for oil and gas and geothermal resources would be foregone. One small precious metals mine is anticipated.

The development of one well would be foregone, limiting water availability for livestock grazing management.

Some impact is expected to this high erosion potential area due to the development of a small precious metals mine on this watershed.

Alternative B

Alternative B is the same as the proposed action.

Alternative C (No Wilderness)

Under this alternative, the entire 106,200-acre South Reveille WSA would be recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

The South Reveille WSA's wilderness values of size, naturalness, and outstanding opportunities for solitude would be lost.

Recreational ORV use would increase to about 4,000 visits annually. There would be no significant impact on recreational ORV use.

Areas of moderate potential for metallic minerals, oil and gas, and geothermal resources would be available for exploration and development. There would be no impact on development of mineral resources in the South Reveille WSA.

There would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance or construction in the South Reveille WSA.

Some accelerated erosion in high erosion potential areas may occur due to increased exploration and development of metallic minerals leading to rainfall on poorly placed roads, cleared areas, and disturbed soil.

BLUE EAGLE WSA (NV-060-158/199)

Proposed Action (Partial Wilderness)

Under the Proposed Action, 51,350 acres of the Blue Eagle WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation and 8,960 acres would be recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

On the 51,350 acres designated wilderness, values of naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude would be preserved. The area's most spectacular scenery, naturalness, and opportunities for primitive recreation and solitude would be retained. On the 8,960 acres not designated wilderness, there would be a slight reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitide because of increased recreational ORV use.

Recreational ORV use would continue on five miles of cherrystem roads and 12 miles of ways on the 51,350 acres designated wilderness and 400 visits would be foregone annually.

On the 8,960 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness, recreational ORV use would increase to about 100 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

Development of potential mineral resources would be foregone on 51,350 acres. Potential mineral resources on 8,960 acres would be available for energy and mineral development.

There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and construction. Five spring developments would be maintained. Six miles of pipeline would be completed.

Alternative A (All Wilderness)

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the entire 59,560 acres of the Blue Eagle WSA would be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation.

On 59,560 acres of the WSA there would be a slight improvement of the area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude because of the elimination of approximately 670 visits of recreational ORV use. There would be a slight decrease in the area's naturalness and opportunities for solitude in the northeastern area of the WSA because of concentrated grazing facilities in the area.

Recreational ORV use would be foregone on the 59,560 acres designated wilderness and 670 visits would be foregone annually. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

Development of areas of moderate potential for metallic minerals and high potential for oil and gas resources would be foregone.

There would be no impacts on grazing facility maintenance or construction. Five spring developments would be maintained. Six miles of pipeline would be completed.

Alternative B (Partial Wilderness)

Under the this alternative, 59,350 acres of the Blue Eagle WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation and 960 acres would be recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

On the 59,350 acres designated wilderness naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude would improve slightly because of the elimination of approximately 500 visits of recreational ORV use. The areas most spectacular scenery, naturalness, and opportunities for primitive recreation and solitude would be retained. On the 960 acres not designated wilderness, there would be a slight reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitide because of increased recreational ORV use.

Recreational ORV use would be foregone on the 59,350 acres designated wilderness and 500 visits would be foregone annually. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

On the 960 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness, recreational ORV use would increase, but would not exceed 100 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

Development of 960 acres of moderate potential for metallic minerals and 400 acres of high potential for oil and gas would be foregone.

There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and construction.

Alternative C (No Wilderness)

Under the No Wilderness Alternative, the 59,560 acres of the Blue Eagle WSA would be recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

The Blue Eagle WSA's wilderness values of size, naturalness, and outstanding opportunities for solitude would be lost.

Recreational ORV use would increase, but remain below 670 visits annually. There would be no significant impact on recreational ORV use.

Areas of moderate potential for metallic minerals and high potential for oil and gas resources would be available for development. There would be no impact on development of mineral resources in the Blue Eagle WSA.

There would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance or construction in the Blue Eagle WSA.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND PLANNING PROCESS

PURPOSE AND NEED FOR ACTION

PURPOSE AND NEED FOR PLAN AMENDMENT

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to manage and preserve the wilderness characteristics on 234,080 acres of public land in the Tonopah Resource Area, Battle Mountain District. "To secure for the American people of present and future generations the benefits of an enduring resource of wilderness" (Wilderness Act 1964). Approximately 249,720 acres would be released to management under multiple use for purposes other than preservation as wilderness.

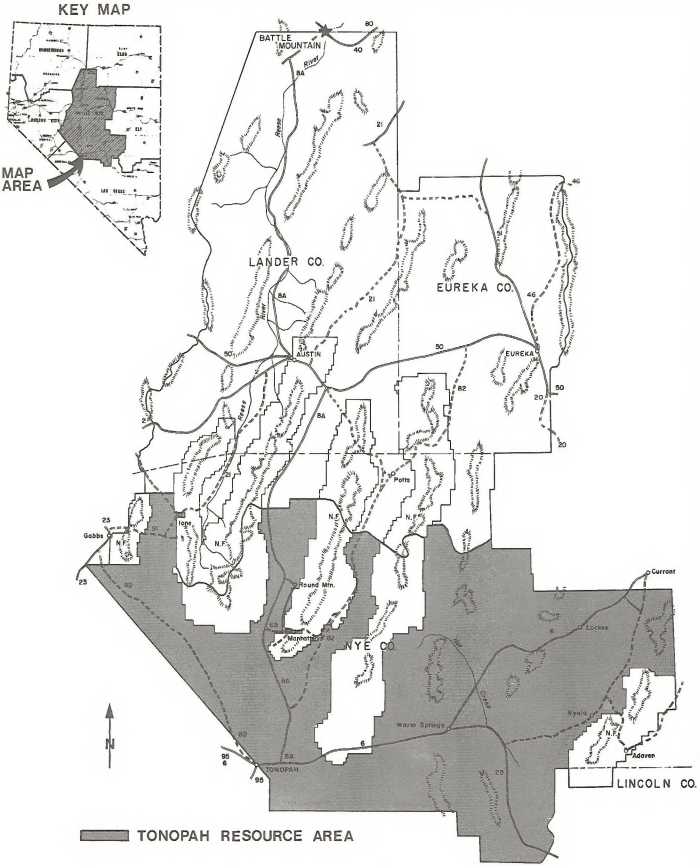
This EIS assesses the environmental consequences of managing all eight WSAs as wilderness, nonwilderness and partial wilderness. This planning effort is needed to select and establish a resource of wilderness values for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System.

The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) directs the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to manage the public lands and their resources under the principles of multiple use and sustained yield. Section 603 of FLPMA requires a wilderness review of BLM roadless areas of 5,000 or more acres and roadless islands. The BLM inventory process identified Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) which have the mandatory wilderness characteristics of size, naturalness, and opportunities for solitude and/or primitive recreation. Suitable or nonsuitable wilderness recommendations for each WSA will be presented to the President by the Secretary of the Interior. The President will then make recommendations to the Congress. Areas can be designated wilderness only by an act of Congress. If designated as wilderness, an area would be managed in accordance with the Wilderness Act of 1964.

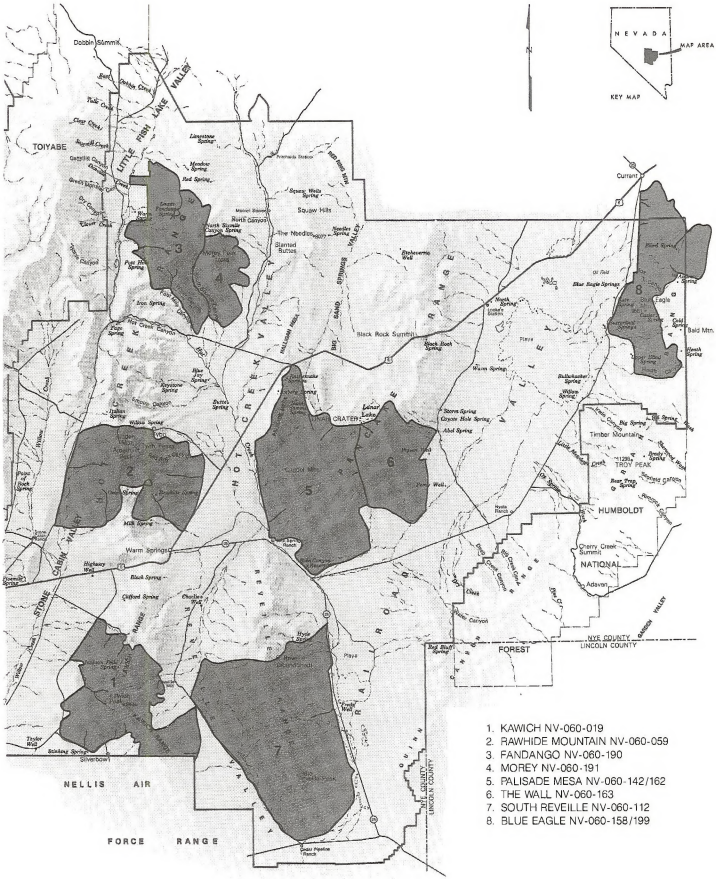
The eight WSAs being studied are not covered by the Tonopah Management Framework Plan (MFP). Therefore, designating any of the Wilderness Study Areas as wilderness would not be in conformance with the land use plan as it is currently written. It will be necessary to amend the management framework plan if Congress officially designates any of the Wilderness Study Areas as wilderness.

LOCATION

Located in central Nevada, the Bureau of Land Management's Battle Mountain District encompasses approximately 14 million acres, of which about 11 million areas are public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The Battle Mountain District's Tonopah Resource Area includes approximately 6.1 million acres of public land in Nye and Esmeralda Counties, Nevada (see location Map). The eight Wilderness Study Areas, totaling 483,050 acres of public land administered by the BLM, are located in the eastern half of the Tonopah Resource Area (Wilderness Study Areas Map).



Battle Mountain District
LOCATION MAP



WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE IDENTIFICATION/SCOPING

The scoping process for the Tonopah Wilderness EIS encompassed issues identified by the BLM staff, by the public during formal scoping comment periods, at public meetings held in Tonopah and Reno (in June 1982), and from comments on the draft EIS by the public and by Federal, State and local agencies. During the scoping period, there was consultation with the Nevada State Historic Preservation Officer concerning the presence of absence of cultural resources in the WSAs that would be eligible for nomination for listing on the "National Register of Historic Places." The United States Fish and Wildlife Service was consulted concerning the potential effects of wilderness designation on threatened or endangered species. The environmental issues identified for analysis in this EIS as a result of the scoping process are presented below for each WSA.

Kawich WSA

1. Impacts on Wilderness Values. The wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude, opportunities for primitive recreation, and various special features of the WSA could benefit from wilderness designation. The same values may be adversely affected by uses and actions that would occur should the WSAs not be designated wilderness.

2. Impacts on Recreational Off Road Vehicle Use. Wilderness designation would eliminate the use of recreational off-road vehicles (ORVs) in the WSA. Eliminating this use could affect the availability of opportunities for ORV recreation and shift ORV uses currently occurring in the WSA to adjacent lands.

3. Impacts on Development of Mineral Resources. Wilderness designation could affect the development of potential and know mineral resources by withdrawing designated lands from mineral entry. Development of existing minerals resources within designated wilderness areas could be affected by wilderness management restrictions.

4. Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction. Wilderness designation could affect livestock operations by precluding some planned range development projects necessary for utilization of forage at planned levels.

5. Impacts on Mule Deer Populations. Wilderness designation could preclude some planned mechanical manipulation of pinyon pine and juniper encroachment on mule deer critical winter range. This may result in the reduction of browse available during the critical winter months, causing populations of mule deer to change.

Rawhide Mountain WSA

1. Impacts on Wilderness Values. The wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude, opportunities for primitive recreation, and various special features of the WSA could benefit from wilderness designation. The same values may be adversely affected by uses and actions that would occur should the WSAs not be designated wilderness.

2. Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use. Wilderness designation would eliminate the use of recreational off-road vehicles (ORVs) in the WSA. Eliminating this use could affect the availability of opportunities for ORV recreation and shift ORV uses currently occurring in the WSA to adjacent lands.

3. Impacts on Development of Mineral Resources. Wilderness designation could affect the development of potential and known mineral resources by withdrawing designated lands from mineral entry. Development of existing minerals resources with designated wilderness areas could be affected by wilderness management restrictions.

4. Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction. Wilderness designation could affect livestock operations by precluding some planned range development projects necessary for utilization of forage at planned levels.

Morey WSA

1. Impacts on Wilderness Values. The wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude, opportunities for primitive recreation, and various special features of the WSA could benefit from wilderness designation. The same values may be adversely affected by uses and actions that would occur should the WSAs not be designated wilderness.

2. Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use. Wilderness designation would eliminate the use of recreational off-road vehicles (ORVs) in the WSA. Eliminating this use could affect the availability of opportunities for ORV recreation and shift ORV use currently occurring in the WSA to adjacent lands.

3. Impacts on Development of Mineral Resources. Wilderness designation could affect the development of potential and known mineral resources by withdrawing designated lands from mineral entry. Development of existing minerals resources within designated wilderness areas could be affected by wilderness management restrictions.

4. Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction. Wilderness designation could affect livestock operations by precluding some planned range development projects necessary for utilization of forage at planned levels.

5. Impacts on Mule Deer Populations. Wilderness designation could preclude some planned mechanical vegetation manipulation of pinyon pine and juniper encroachment on mule deer critical winter range. This may result in the reduction of browse available during the critical winter months causing populations of mule deer to change.

Fandango WSA

1. Impacts on Wilderness Values. The wilderness values of naturalness, and various special features of the WSA could benefit from wilderness designation. The same values may be adversely affected by uses and actions that would occur should the WSAs not be designated wilderness.

2. Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use. Wilderness designation would eliminate the use of recreational off-road vehicles (ORVs) in the WSA. Eliminating this use could affect the availability of opportunities for ORV recreation and shift ORV uses currently occurring in the WSA to adjacent lands.

3. Impacts on Development of Mineral Resources. Wilderness designation could affect the development of potential and known mineral resource by withdrawing designated lands from mineral entry. Development of existing minerals resources within designated wilderness areas could be affected by wilderness management restrictions.

4. Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction. Wilderness designation could affect livestock operations by precluding some planned range development projects necessary for utilization of forage at planned levels.

5. Impacts on Mule Deer Populations. Wilderness designation could preclude some planned mechanical vegetation manipulation of pinyon pine and juniper encroachment on mule deer critical winter range. This may result in the reduction of browse available during the critical winter months causing mule deer populations to change.

Palisade Mesa WSA

1. Impacts on Wilderness Values. The wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude, opportunities for primitive recreation, and various special features of the WSA would benefit from wilderness designation. The same values may be adversely affected by uses and actions that would occur should the WSAs not be designated wilderness.

2. Impacts on Recreation Off-Road Vehicle Use. Wilderness designation would eliminate the use of recreational off-road vehicles (ORVs) in the WSA. Eliminating this could affect the availability of opportunities for ORV recreation and shift ORV uses currently occurring in the WSA to adjacent lands.

3. Impacts on Development of Mineral Resources. Wilderness designation could affect the development of potential and known mineral resources by withdrawing designated lands from mineral entry. Development of existing minerals resources within designated wilderness areas could be affected by wilderness management restrictions.

4. Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction. Wilderness designation could affect livestock operations by precluding some planned range development projects necessary for utilization of forage at planned levels.

The Wall WSA

1. Impacts on Wilderness Values. The wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude, opportunities for primitive recreation, and various special features of the WSA could benefit from wilderness designation. The same values may be adversely affected by uses and actions that would occur should the WSAs not be designated wilderness.

2. Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use. Wilderness designation would eliminate the use of recreational off-road vehicles (ORVs) in the WSA. Eliminating this use could affect the availability of opportunities for ORV recreation and shift ORV uses currently occurring in the WSA to adjacent lands.

3. Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction. Wilderness designation could affect livestock operations by precluding some planned range development projects necessary for utilization of forage at planned levels.

South Reveille WSA

1. Impacts on Wilderness Values. The wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude, opportunities for primitive recreation, and various special features of the WSA could benefit from wilderness designation. The same values may be adversely affected by uses and actions that would occur should the WSAs not be designated wilderness.

2. Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use. Wilderness designation would eliminate the use of recreational off-road vehicles (ORVs) in the WSA. Eliminating this use could affect the availability of opportunities for ORV recreation and shift ORV uses currently occurring in the WSA to adjacent lands.

3. Impacts on Development of Mineral Resources. Wilderness designation could affect the development of potential and known mineral resources by withdrawing designated lands from mineral entry. Development of existing minerals resources with designated wilderness areas could be affected by wilderness management restrictions.

4. Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction. Wilderness designation could affect livestock operations by precluding some planned range development projects necessary for utilization of forage at planned levels.

5. High Erosion Potential Watersheds. Wilderness designation could affect the occurence of accelerated erosion on high erosion potential areas by eliminating surface disturbing activities within the WSA.

Blue Eagle WSA

1. Impacts on Wilderness Values. The wilderness values of naturalness, oportunities for solitude, opportunities for primitive recreation, and various special features of the WSA could benefit from wilderness designation. The same values may be adversely affected by uses and actions that would occur should the WSAs not be designated wilderness.

2. Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use. Wilderness designation would eliminate the use of recreational off-road vehicles (ORVs) in the WSA. Eliminating this use could affect the availability of opportunities for ORV recreation and shift ORV uses currently occurring in the WSA to adjacent lands.

3. Impacts on Development of Mineral Resources. Wilderness designation could affect the development of potential and known mineral resources by withdrawing designated lands from mineral entry. Development of existing minerals resources within designated wilderness areas could be affected by wilderness management restrictions.

4. Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction. Wilderness designation could affect livestock operations by precluding some planned range development projects necessary for utilization of forage at planned levels.

ISSUES CONSIDERED BUT DROPPED FROM FURTHER ANALYSIS

The following issues or concerns were identified in scoping but were not selected for detailed analysis in this EIS. After careful consideration of each, the degree of concern, environmental effect, or relevance was not significant enough to justify further intensive study. The reasons for not analyzing these issues in depth are discussed below:

The following issues were dropped from further consideration in all WSAs:

1. Impact of wilderness designation on reintroduction of bighorn sheep. The Nevada Department of Fish and Game has noted that bighorn sheep could be reintroduced in some of the WSAs. The wilderness management Policy provides guidelines for reintroduction of native species into WSAs, therefore designation would not affect reintroduction. Since potential reintroduction efforts are speculative, this issue was not selected for analysis.

2. Economic impact on livestock operations. Concerns were raised that wilderness designation would require modified livestock operations, causing significant economic hardships for the livestock industry. The Wilderness Management policy provides for continuing livestock operations at historic levels, subject to reasonable controls. The impact of wilderness designation on livestock operators as a result of constraints on planned range developments is considered in Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction.

3. Impact on Cultural Resources. Inventories and consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer during scoping determined that there are no cultural sites which exist in the WSAs that qualify as National Register Sites other than the Tybo Charcoal Kilns in the Rawhide WSA. There are no sites which would be affected by designation or nondesignation of wilderness. Therefore, the issue of impact to cultural resource from wilderness designation was dropped from further analysis.

4. Impact on Water Quality. The issue of how water quality would be affected by wilderness designation or nondesignation in each of the WSAs was identified. Water quality will be maintained or improved in accordance with State and Federal standards. Management actions on public land within watersheds will be designed to protect water quality. It is not anticipated that designation or nondesignation of wilderness would affect water quality within the WSA.

5. Impacts on Endangered Species. Wildlife and vegetation inventories and consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service did not identify any threatened or endangered species in the WSAs.

The following issues were considered in specific WSAs and dropped from consideration within that WSA. These include:

Kawich WSA

1. Impacts on Endangered Species. Wildlife and vegetation inventories and consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service did not identify any threatened or endangered species in the WSAs. Therefore, this issue was dropped from further consideration.

2. Impacts on Private Inholdings. The impact of wilderness designation or nondesignation on private land inholdings. in WSAs was identified as an issue in comments on the Draft EIS. This issue was dropped from further consideration because the uses on these lands would not change as a result of designation or nondesignation.

3. High Erosion Potential Watersheds. High erosion potential watersheds were mentioned in the scoping process. No development is expected to occur within these areas of the WSA. Therefore, designation or nondesignation of wilderness will not affect erosion of watersheds in this WSA.

Rawhide WSA

1. High Erosion Potential Watersheds. High erosion potential watersheds were mentioned in the scoping process. Wilderness designation of nondesignation will have no impact on the high erosion potential watershed identified in this WSA. This issue is dropped from further consideration.

The following issue is not an environmental issue, but is a program concern that was frequently identified as an issue during scoping.

The WSAs being studied are not what Congress intended to be included in the National Wilderness Preservation System. Some or all of the areas being studied for Wilderness designation may not be the kind of area Congress intended to have considered for wilderness. This issue was dropped since it was determined in the inventory stage of the BLM's wilderness review process that all the WSAs being studied meet the minimum standards for wilderness identified by the Congress in the Wilderness Act of 1964 and FLPMA of 1976.

THE PLANNING PROCESS, SELECTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION, AND DEVELOPMENT OF ALTERNATIVES

The Planning Process and Selection of the Proposed Action

Development of the Proposed Action is guided by requirements of the Bureau's Planning Regulations, 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), part 1600. The BLM's Wilderness Study Policy (published February 3, 1982, in the Federal Register) supplements the planning regulations by providing the specific factors to be considered in developing suitability recommendations during the planning sequence.

The Proposed Action recommends areas as suitable for wilderness designation where the wilderness values and multiple resource benefits associated with wilderness designation, such as the protection of cultural resource, watersheds, and wildlife habitat, are capable of balancing the benefits of other resource values and uses which could be foregone due to wilderness designation. All areas recommended as suitable for wilderness under this alternative can be managed as wilderness over the long-term.

If this alternative were to be implemented six Wilderness Study areas would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation. The acreages in each WSA recommended suitable and nonsuitable for wilderness designation are as follows:

WSA	Acres Suitable	Acres Nonsuitable
Kawich	0	54,320
Rawhide Mountain	0	64,360
Fandango	31,740	9,200
Morey	14,560	5,560
Palisade Mesa	66,110	33,440
The Wall	30,320	7,680
South Reveille	33,000	73,200
Blue Eagle	58,350 (a)	1,960
TOTAL	234,080	249,720

(a) Includes 750 acres added to original WSA to enhance manageability.

Alternatives That Were Considered and Dropped

There were no alternatives that were brought up in the scoping or planning process that were considered and dropped.

Alternatives to the Proposed Action Selected for Analysis

The BLM Wilderness Study Policy calls for the formulation and evaluation of alternatives ranging from resource protection to resource production. The alternatives assessed in this EIS include: (1) a No Wilderness alternative for each WSA, (2) an All Wilderness alternative for each WSA, (3) and Partial alternatives for each WSA.

To reduce confusion of names of the alternatives used in the draft, the alternatives in this document have been given an alphabetic character. The equivalents are:

Alternative A is used instead of All Wilderness;
Alternative B is used instead of Emphasis on Manageability:
Alternative C is used instead of No Wilderness.

Alternative C, the No Wilderness Alternative, and the No Action Alternative as required by the National Environmental Protection Act, are equivalent. Both advocate continuation of management as outlined in existing MFPs and recommendation of the WSAs as nonsuitable for wilderness.

Alternative A, the All Wilderness Alternative represents the maximum possible acreage that could be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation.

Alternative B, the Emphasis on Manageability Alternative emphasizes the ability to regulate and control mining, ORV activities, and other uses of the Wilderness Study Areas over the long-term.

The Emphasis on Resource Development Alternative emphasizes commodity production and use of areas having significant resource development potential. This would mean recommending as nonsuitable for wilderness designation all areas with good or high mineral potential ratings, areas where the implementation of wildlife habitat management plans would require the mechanical manipulation of vegetation, areas where vegetative manipulation projects for domestic livestock may be feasible in the future, and areas where motor vehicles are currently being used for recreational purposes. Emphasis on Resource Development is included in the No Wilderness or All Wilderness Alternatives.

Outlines below are the Proposed Action and Alternatives developed for each of the WSAs:

Kawich WSA

The Proposed Action for the Kawich WSA is Alternative C (No Wilderness). Under this proposal, none of the 54,320 acres would be designated as wilderness but would be managed for multiple use, as described in part in this document and in detail in the Tonopah Resource Area MFP.

The rationale for this proposal are (1) the wilderness values of the area are outstanding, (2) the area has a high to moderate potential for precious metals, (3) forty-two mines of roads and ways will make control of ORV difficult if possible, (4) vegetative manipulation by mechanical means are needed for mule deer browse re-establishment, and (5) mineral exploration and development of valid discoveries is expected.

Two alternatives were also considered; an All Wilderness Alternative which would designate all 54,320 acres as wilderness (the maximum possible acreage that could be recommended) and a Partial Wilderness Alternative that would recommend 45,220 acres be designated as wilderness and 9,600 acres not be designated wilderness but managed for multiple use.

Rawhide Mountain WSA

The Proposed Action for the Rawhide Mountain WSA is Alternative C (No Wilderness). Under this proposal, none of the 64,360 acres would be designated as wilderness but would be managed for multiple use, as described in part in this document and in detail in the Tonopah Resource Area MFP.

The rationale for this proposal are: (1) the wilderness values of the area a a whole are not outstanding; (2) the potential for precious metals is high and development is anticipated; (3) ORV use of the low areas and mining roads will be difficult to control.

Two alternatives were also considered; an All Wilderness Alternative which would designate all 64,360 acres as wilderness (the maximum possible acreage that could be recommended) and a Partial Wilderness Alternative that would recommend 41,960 acres be designated as wilderness and 22,400 acres not be designated wilderness but managed for multiple use.

Morey WSA

The Proposed Action for the Morey WSA is Partial Wilderness. Under this proposal, 14,560 acres would be designated wilderness. The eastern fan portion of the WSA, totaling 5,560 acres, would not be designated wilderness but managed for multiple use as described in this document and in the Tonopah Resource Area MFP.

The rationale for this proposal are: (1) the wilderness values are outstanding; (2) mineral potential for precious metals is moderate; (3) the eastern fan has low wilderness values; and (4) the eastern fan has good oil and gas and geothermal potential.

Three alternatives were also considered; an All Wilderness Alternative which would designate all 20,120 acres as wilderness (the maximum possible acreage that could be recommended) and a Partial Wilderness Alternative that would combine the Morey and Fandango WSAs by closing the common boundary road would recommend 46,300 acres be designated as wilderness and 14,760 acres not be designated wilderness but be managed for multiple use under the Tonopah Resource Area MFP. Under the No Wilderness Alternative, none of the 20,120 acres would be designated wilderness but would be managed for multiple use under the Tonopah Resource Area MFP.

Fandango WSA

The Proposed Action for the Fandango WSA is Partial Wilderness. Under this proposal 31,740 acres would be designated wilderness. The western and southern fan portions of the WSA, totaling 9,200 acres, would not be designated wilderness but managed for multiple use as described in this document and in the Tonopah Resource Area MFP.

The rationale for this proposal are: (1) high wilderness values in the mountainous area; (2) low mineral and energy values in the mountainous area; (3) low wilderness values on the fans; (4) moderate energy and geothermal values on the fans.

Three alternatives were also considered; an All Wilderness Alternative which would designate all 40,940 acres as wilderness (the maximum possible acreage that could be recommended) and a Partial Wilderness Alternative that would combine the Fandango and Morey WSAs by closing the common boundary road, and would recommend 46,300 acres be designated as wilderness and 14,760 acres not be designated wilderness but be managed for multiple use under the Tonopah Resource Area MFP. Under the No Wilderness Alternative, none of the 40,960 acres would be designated wilderness but would be managed for multiple use under the Tonopah Resource Area MFP.

Palisade Mesa WSA

The Proposed Action for the Palisade Mesa WSA is Partial Wilderness. Under this proposal, 66,110 acres would be designated wilderness. The western and southern fan portions of the WSA, totaling 33,440 acres, would not be designated wilderness but managed for multiple use as described in this document and in the Tonopah Resource Area MFP.

The rationale for this proposal are: (1) high wilderness values in the upland area; (2) moderate precious metals, values in the upland area; (3) low wilderness values on the western and southern fans; (4) moderate oil and gas values on the southern fan; and (5) ORV use on the western and southern fan will be difficult to control.

Three alternatives were also considered; and All Wilderness Alternative which would designate all 99,500 acres as wilderness (the maximum possible acreage that could be recommended) and a Partial Wilderness Alternative that would combine the Palisade Mesa and The Wall WSAs by closing the common boundary road and would recommend 113,870 acres be designated as wilderness and 23,680 acres not be designated wilderness but be managed for multiple use under the Tonopah Resource Area MFP. Under the No Wilderness alternative, none of this 99,550 acres would be designated wilderness but would be managed for multiple use under the Tonopah Resource Area MFP.

The Wall WSA

The Proposed Action for The Wall WSA is Partial Wilderness. Under this proposal 30,320 acres would be designated wilderness. The eastern fan portion of the WSA, totaling 7,680 acres, would not be designated wilderness but managed for multiple use as described in this document and in the Tonopah Resource Area MFP.

The rationale for this proposal are: (1) high wilderness values in the upland area; (2) low mineral and energy values; and (3) easy access to the eastern fan by ORVs.

Three alternatives were also considered; an All Wilderness Alternative which would designate all 38,000 acres as wilderness (the maximum possible acres that could be recommended) and a Partial Wilderness Alternative that would combine The Wall and Palisade Mesa WSAs by closing the common boundary road, and would recommend 113,870 acres be designated as wilderness and 23,680 acres not be designated wilderness but be managed for multiple use under the Tonopah Resource Area MFP. Under the No Wilderness Alternative, none of the 38,000 acres would be designated wilderness but would be managed for multiple use under the Tonopah Resource Area MFP.

South Reveille WSA

The Proposed Action for the South Reveille WSA is Partial Wilderness. Under this proposal, 33,000 acres would be designated wilderness. The perhipery of the WSA, totaling 73,200 acres, would not be designated wilderness but managed for multiple use as described in this document and in the Tonopah Resource Area MFP.

The rationale for this proposal are: (1) high wilderness values in the mountainous core area; (2) moderate mineral values in the core area: (3) low wilderness values in the periphery area; and (4) moderate minerals, oil and gas, and geothermal values in the periphery area.

Two alternatives were also considered; An All Wilderness Alternative which would designate all 106,200 acres as wilderness (the maximum possible acreage that could be recommended) and the No Wilderness Alternative where none of the 106,200 acres would be designated wilderness but would be managed for multiple use under the Tonopah Resource Area MFP.

Blue Eagle WSA

The Proposed Action for the Blue Eagle WSA is Partial Wilderness. Under this proposal, 58,350 acres would be designated wilderness. The northwest and southwest portions of the WSA, totaling 1,960 acres, would not be designated wilderness but managed for multiple use a described in this document and in the Tonopah Resource Area MFP.

The rationale for this proposal are: (1) outstanding wilderness values in the mountainous area; (2) low mineral and energy values in the mountainous area; (3) high oil and gas and moderate mineral values in the northwest and southwest areas; and (4) low wilderness values in the northwest and southwest area.

Three alternatives were also considered; an All Wilderness Alternative which would designate all 59,560 acres as wilderness (the maximum possible acreage that could be recommended) and a Partial Wilderness Alternative that would recommend 59,350 acres be designated as wilderness and 960 acres not be designated wilderness but be managed for multiple use under the Tonopah Resource Area MFP. Under the No Wilderness Alternative, none of the 59,560 acres would be designated wilderness but would be managed for multiple use under the Tonopah Resource Area MFP.

Chapter 2

PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

Since the pattern of future actions within the WSAs cannot be predicted with certainty, assumptions were made to allow the analysis of impacts under the Proposed Action and alternatives. These assumptions are the basis of for the impacts identified in this EIS. They are not management plans or proposals, but represent feasible patterns of management activities which could occur under the alternatives analyzed.

KAWICH WSA (NV-060-019)

Proposed Action (No Wilderness)

All 54,320 acres of public land in the Kawich WSA would be recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction Actions

The Kawich WSA would continue to be managed for approximately 1,900 AUMs of livestock grazing use within two allotments. Four miles of existing fence, three miles of pipeline, and two spring developments within the WSA would be maintained for livestock management purposes. No additional range developments would be constructed in the WSA.

Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

The lands within the WSA would remain open to recreational ORV use. Approximately 920 visits of ORV use occurs annually within the WSA. This use is expected to increase to 1,300 visits per year in the foreseeable future.

There are 17 miles of cherrystem roads that protrude into the WSA and 25 miles of vehicle ways within the boundary of the WSA. These will be managed to provide for recreational ORV use up to 1,300 visits annual. No other development of roads or ways is anticipated because of the low use the area receives.

Other Recreation

The Kawich WSA would managed to provide for other recreation activities in addition to recreation ORV use. These activities would include hunting, hiking, rock and mountain climbing, horseback riding and camping. Current use is estimated at about 440 visits per year within the WSA. These recreation visits are expected to increase to 740 visits per year in the foreseeable future. Hunting visits are currently estimated to be about 40 visits and are expected to increase to 120 visits per year in the foreseeable future. No recreation facilities or trails exist in the WSA. Development of recreation facilities is not anticipated.

Mineral Resource Actions

A high level of exploration and development activity is anticipated in the first few years if the area is not designated wilderness. It is projected there would be five Notices of Intent per year for the first few years. Based on past experience, it is expected that each project would have up to two miles of road and eight pads for a total disturbed area of five acres. The total disturbance in the WSA is expected to be about 25 acres per year. The results of this exploration will determine the overall impact on the WSA in the future.

Although there are no known discoveries, some development of the 393 existing mining claims located in the WSA is anticipated. Goechemical analyses in the area between Tobe Spring and the Craig Canyon drainage in the northwest portion of the WSA indicate high favorability for metallic minerals within the WSA. It is assumed that there would be three discoveries:

1. A small underground gold mine on the border of the WSA in the Eden Creek area. The access will be from outside the WSA. Road construction is not anticipated inside the WSA. Ten acres inside the WSA will be disturbed with about three acres of mine and seven acres of tailings.

2. A small open pit precious metals mine on the border of the WSA at the Tobe Spring Road. Access will be from Stone Cabin Valley. About twenty acres inside the WSA will be disturbed including about six and a half acres for the mine, twelve acres for tailings, and one and a half acres of road (one mile).

3. A small precious metals mine at the border of the WSA in the Breen Ranch area. Access will be from Breen Ranch. About five acres will be disturbed inside the WSA including about two acres for the mine and about three acres of tailings. Road construction is not anticipated inside the WSA.

No validity examinations would be required.

Potential for development of other locatable minerals is low because of low favorability for occurrence. Potential for development of saleable minerals is low because of the distance to markets.

The WSA is classified as having 7,040 acres with moderate potential for oil and gas occurrence in the southeast corner. There are 11 oil and gas leases covering about 9,760 acres. No development of these is anticipated due to lack of industry interest distance from markets, and the availability of better potential resources outside of the WSA.

Big Game Habitat Management Actions

The Kawich WSA would continue to be managed for big game habitat enhancement. Approximately 9,000 acres of pinyon and juniper encroachment would be thinned by mechanical means to allow for browse re-establishment.

Alternative A (All Wilderness)

All 54,320 acres of public land in the Kawich WSA would be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation.

Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction Actions

The Kawich WSA would continue to be managed for approximately 1,900 AUMs of livestock grazing use on two allotments. Four miles of existing fence and two spring developments within the WSA would be maintained for livestock management purposes. No additional range developments would be constructed in the WSA.

Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

The Kawich WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use, however 17 miles of cherrystem roads would be open. This action would not change the current recreational ORV use that is estimated to occur in the area annually.

Other Recreation

The Kawich WSA would be open for non-motorized recreation activities including hunting, horseback riding, camping, hiking and rock and mountain climbing. Current use is estimated at about 440 visits per year within the WSA and are expected to increase to 740 per year in the foreseeable future. Hunting visits are currently estimated to be about 40 visits and are expected to increase to 125 visits per year in the foreseeable future. No recreation facilities or trails exist in the WSA. Development of recreation facilities is not anticipated because of the low use the area receives.

Mineral Resources Actions

Subject to valid existing rights, the Kawich WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mining and mineral leasing laws. Validity examinations would be conducted on mining claims which have plans of operation filed that are presently located within the WSA. Three mineral developments of the 393 mining claims that currently exist in the WSA are anticipated:

1. A small underground gold mine on the border of the WSA in the Eden Creek area. The access will be from outside the WSA. Road construction is not anticipated inside the WSA. Ten acres inside the WSA will be disturbed with about three acres of mine and seven acres of tailings.

2. A small open pit precious metals mine on the border of the WSA at the Tobe Spring Road. Access will be from Stone Cabin Valley. About twenty acres inside the WSA will be disturbed including about six and a half acres for the mine, twelve acres for tailings, and one and a half acres of road (one mile).

3. A small precious metals mine at the border of the WSA in the Breen Ranch area. Access will be from Breen Ranch. About five acres will be disturbed inside the WSA including about two acres for the mine and about three acres of tailings. Road construction is not anticipated inside the WSA.

Potential for development of other locatable minerals is low because of low favorability for occurrence. Potential for development of saleable minerals is low because of the distance to markets.

The WSA is classified as having 7,040 acres with a moderate favorability for oil and gas occurrence in the southeast corner. There are 11 oil and gas leases covering about 9,760 acres. No development is expected within the WSA.

Management Actions to exchange for Private Inholdings

Action would be initiated to acquire the 560 acres of private land inholdings through voluntary exchange.

Big Game Habitat Management Actions

Pinyon and juniper thinning to allow for browse re-establishment on 9,000 acres by mechanical or biological means would not be permitted. Prescribed burning may be done where required to maintain the natural condition of fire-dependent ecosystems.

Alternative B (Partial Wilderness)

A portion of the Kawich WSA, 45,220 acres, would be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation, including 500 acres added to the original WSA to improve its manageability. The remaining 9,600 acres, located along the northwestern and southeastern boundary of the WSA, would be recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction Actions

The Kawich WSA would continue to be managed for approximately 1,900 AUMs of livestock grazing use. The two spring developments and four miles of barbed wire fence would be maintained, for livestock management purposes in the parcel recommended suitable for wilderness designation.

Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

The 45,220 acre parcel recommended as suitable for wilderness designation would be closed to recreational ORV use. Cherrystem roads extending into the WSA from the northern and eastern boundaries for a total of 17 miles and ten miles of ways would be closed to recreational ORV use. This action is anticipated to reduce the recreational ORV use from 920 to 490 visits annually.

The 9,600 acre parcel recommended nonsuitable would remain open for ORV use. Projection estimates indicate that recreational ORV use would increase from 440 to 500 visits in the foreseeable future on this area.

Other Recreation

The Kawich WSA would remain open for non-motorized recreation activities. These include hunting, fishing, horseback riding, camping, hiking, rock and mountain climbing. Current use is estimated at about 440 visits per year within the WSA. Other recreation visits are expected to increase to 740 per year in the foreseeable future. Hunting visits are currently estimated to be about 40 visits and are expected to increase to 125 visits per year in the foreseeable future. No recreation facilities or trails exist in the WSA. Development of recreation facilities is not anticipated.

Mineral Resource Actions

Subject to valid existing rights, the 45,220 acres of the Kawich WSA recommended suitable would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws. Existing mining claims which have plans of operation filed would be examined to determine validity. Plans of operations for development of claims that exist at the time of designation would be processed in accordance with existing regulations.

The WSA is classified as having about 2,560 acres with high potential for metallic mineral resource within the suitable area. Although there are no developed mines, three mineral resource developments are anticipated:

1. A small underground gold mine on the border of the WSA in the Eden Creek area. The access will be from outside the WSA. Road construction is not anticipated inside the WSA. Ten acres inside the WSA will be disturbed with about three acres of mine and seven acres of tailings.

2. A small open pit precious metals mine on the border of the WSA at the Tobe Spring Road. Access will be from Stone Cabin Valley. About twenty acres inside the WSA will be disturbed including about six and a half acres for the mine, twelve acres for tailings, and one and a half acres of road (one mile).

3. A small precious metals mine at the border of the WSA in the Breen Ranch area. Access will be from Breen Ranch. About five acres will be disturbed inside the WSA including about two acres for the mine and about three acres of tailings. Road construction is not anticipated inside the WSA.

Management Actions to exchange for Private Land

Action would be initiated to acquire 560 acres of private lands through voluntary exchange. After acquisition, a cherrystem road providing access from the boundary road would be closed to vehicle use.

Big Game Habitat Management Actions

Pinyon and juniper thinning on approximately 4,000 acres to allow for browse re-establishment by mechanical means will not be permitted. Prescribed burning may be done where required to maintain the natural condition of fire-dependent ecosystems.

Approximately 5,000 acres of pinyon and juniper encroachment would be thinned to allow for browse re-establishment on 9,600 acres of the area recommended nonsuitable. The thinning may be done by prescribed fire or mechanical means to enhance big game habitat.

RAWHIDE MOUNTAIN (NV-060-059)

Proposed Action (No Wilderness)

All 64,360 acres of public land in the Rawhide Mountain WSA would be recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

Grazing facility Maintenance and Construction Actions

The Rawhide Mountain WSA would continue to be managed for approximately 1,300 AUMs of livestock grazing use on three allotments. One spring development within the WSA would be maintained for livestock management purposes. The proposed well, four miles of fence, and three miles of pipeline would be constructed in the WSA.

Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

The lands within the WSA would be managed for recreation ORV use. Approximately 1,000 visits of ORV use occurs annually within the WSA. This use is expected to increase to about 1,400 visits per year in the foreseeable future.

Twelve miles of cherrystem roads protrude into the WSA and there are 17 miles of vehicle ways which would provide ORV access within the boundary of the WSA. No other development of roads or ways is anticipated.

Other Recreation

The Rawhide Mountain WSA would be open for other recreation activities in addition to recreational ORV use. These activities would include hunting, sightseeing, driving for pleasure, fishing, hiking, rock and mountain climbing, backpacking and camping. Current use is estimated at about 220 visits per year within the WSA, and are expected to increase to 370 per year in the foreseeable future. Hunting visits are currently estimated to be about 30 visits and are expected to increase to 50 visits per year in the foreseeable future. No recreation facilities or trails exist within the WSA. Development of recreation facilities is not anticipated.

Mineral Resource Actions

A high level of exploration and development activity is anticipated if the area is not designated wilderness. It is projected there would be five Notices of Intent per year. Based on past experience, it is expected that each project would have up to 1.5 miles of road and eight pads for a total disturbed area of four acres. The total disturbance in the WSA is expected to be about 20 acres per year. The results of the exploration will determine the overall impact on the WSA in the future.

Although there are no developed mines, some development of the 913 existing mining claims located in the WSA is anticipated. Geochemical analyses in the area between Hidden Mountain and the Twin Peaks area in the northwest portion of the WSA indicate high favorability for metallic mineral ores within the WSA It is assumed that there would be two development:

1. An underground mine on the border of the WSA at Tybo Canyon. About 15 acres inside the WSA will be disturbed including one mile of road with a disturbed area of about 1.5 acres, three acres of mine, seven acres of tailings, and 3.5 acres of millsite.

2. An open pit mine on the border of the WSA in the Little Rawhide Mountain area. It is anticipated about 50 acres will be disturbed inside the WSA including about five acres of millsite, 15 acres of mine, and 30 acres of tailings.

Potential for development of other locatable minerals is low because of low favorability for occurrence. Potential for development of saleable minerals is low because of the distance to markets.

The WSA is classified as having 13,760 acres with moderate potential for oil and gas and 7,360 acres with moderate potential for geothermal occurrence in the east and west respectively. There are 14 oil and gas leases covering about 13,280 acres. No development of these claims is anticipated due to lack of industry interest, distance to market and availability of better potential resources outside of the WSA.

Alternative A (All Wilderness)

All 64,360 acres of public land in the Rawhide Mountain WSA would be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation.

Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction Actions

The Rawhide Mountain WSA would continue to be managed for approximately 1,300 AUMs of livestock grazing use on three allotments. The one spring development within the WSA would be maintained for livestock management purposes. The proposed well, four miles of fence, and three miles of pipeline would be constructed in the WSA.

Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

The Rawhide Mountain WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use. Approximately 1,000 visits for ORV use which occur annually within the WSA would be foregone.

Other Recreation

The Rawhide Mountain WSA would be open to management for non-motorized recreation activities including hunting, sightseeing, driving for pleasure, fishing, hiking, rock and mountain climbing, backpacking and camping. Current use is estimated at about 220 visits per year within the WSA, and is expected to increase to 370 per year in the foreseeable future. Hunting visits are currently estimated to be about 30 visits and are expected to increase to 50 visits per year in the foreseeable future. No recreation facilities or trails exist in the WSA. Development of recreation facilities is not anticipated.

Mineral Resources Actions

Subject to valid existing rights, the Rawhide Mountain WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mining and mineral leasing laws. Validity examinations would be conducted on the mining claims which have plans of operation filed that are presently located within the WSA. Two mineral developments of the 913 mining claims that currently exist in the WSA are anticipated to meet the validity determination at the time of designation:

1. An underground mine on the border of the WSA at Tybo Canyon. About 15 acres inside the WSA will be disturbed including one mile of road with a disturbed area of about 1.5 acres, three acres of mine, seven acres of tailings, and 3.5 acres of millsite.

2. An open pit mine on the border of the WSA in the Little Rawhide Mountain area. It is anticipated about 50 acres will be disturbed inside the WSA including about five acres of millsite, 15 acres of mine, and 30 acres of tailings.

Potential for development of other locatable minerals is low because of low favorability for occurrence. Potential for development of saleable minerals is low because of the distance to markets.

The WSA is classified as having 13,760 acres with moderate favorability for oil and gas and 7,360 acres with moderate potential for geothermal occurrence in the east and west respectively. There are 14 oil and gas leases covering about 13,280 acres.

Alternative B (Partial Wilderness)

A portion of the Rawhide Mountain WSA, 41,960 acres, would be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation. The remaining 22,400 acres, located along the east and west boundary of the WSA, would be recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction Actions

The Rawhide Mountain WSA would continue to be managed for approximately 1,300 AUMs of livestock grazing use on three allotments. One spring development would be maintained in the parcel recommended suitable for wilderness designation. Range developments planned in the WSA would be completed, this includes three miles of pipeline within the suitable area and a the well and four miles of fence in the area recommended nonsuitable.

Recreational Off-road Vehicle Use

The 41,960 acre parcel recommended as suitable for wilderness designation would be closed to recreational ORV use. Cherrystem roads extending into the WSA from the northern and eastern boundaries for a total of eight miles and four miles of ways would be closed to recreational ORV use. This action is anticipated to reduce the recreational ORV use from 470 to 280 visits annually.

The 22,400 acre parcel recommended nonsuitable would remain open for management of ORV use. Projection estimates indicate that recreational ORV use would increase from 530 to 740 visits in the foreseeable future on this area.

Other Recreation

The entire Rawhide Mountain WSA would be open for non-motorized recreation activities. These activities would include hunting, hiking, rock and mountain climbing, horseback riding and camping. Current use is estimated at about 200 visits per year within the WSA, and are expected to increase to 370 per year in the foreseeable future. Hunting visits are currently estimated to be about 30 visits and are expected to increase to 43 visits per year in the foreseeable future. No recreation facilities or trails exist in the WSA. Development of recreation facilities is not anticipated.

Mineral Resource Actions

Subject to valid existing rights, the 41,960 acres of the Rawhide Mountain WSA recommended suitable would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws. There are 871 mining claims in the portion recommended suitable. Claims which have plans of operation filed would be examined to determine validity. Plans of operations for development of claims that exist at the time of designation would be processed in accordance with existing regulations.

The WSA is classified as having 6,240 acres with high potential for metallic mineral resource in the area between Hidden Mountain and Twin Peaks. Therefore, two metallic mineral resource developments are anticipated:

1. An underground mine on the border of the WSA at Tybo Canyon. About 15 acres inside the WSA will be disturbed including one mile of road with a disturbed area of about 1.5 acres, three acres of mine, seven acres of tailings, and 3.5 acres of millsite.

2. An open pit mine on the border of the WSA in the Little Rawhide Mountain area. It is anticipated about 50 acres will be disturbed inside the WSA including about five acres of millsite, 15 acres of mine, and 30 acres of tailings.

Although the area is classified as having 13,760 acres with moderate potential for oil and gas, and 7,360 acres with moderate potential of geothermal resources, exploration is not anticipated inside the WSA. This is based on lack of industry interest, distance to market, and availability of better potential resources outside the WSA.

MOREY WSA (NV-060-191)

Proposed Action (Partial Wilderness)

A portion of the Morey WSA, 14,560 acres, would be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation. The remaining 5,560 acres, located along the eastern and southern boundary of the WSA, would be recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction Actions

The Morey WSA would continue to be managed for approximately 900 AUMs of livestock grazing use on two allotments. Two miles of pipeline would be maintained for livestock management in the parcel recommended suitable for wilderness designation.

Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

The 14,560 acre parcel recommended as suitable for wilderness designation would be open to recreational ORV use including one mile of way. This action is not anticipated to change the recreational ORV use from 150 visits annually.

The 5,560 acre parcel recommended nonsuitable would remain open for ORV use. Projection estimates indicate that recreational ORV use would increase from 50 to 70 visits in the foreseeable future in this area.

Other Recreation

The Morey WSA would be open for management for non-motorized recreation activities. These include hiking, fishing, back packing and rock climbing. Recreational use for these activities is estimated at about 115 visits per year. Designation is expected to initially reduce visits to about 90 per year, however future use is expected to increase to 125 visits per year in the foreseeable future. Hunting visits are currently estimated to be about 115 visits and are expected to increase to 140 visits per year in the foreseeable future. No recreation facilities or trails exist in the WSA. Development of recreation facilities is not anticipated.

Mineral Resource Actions

Subject to valid existing rights, the 14,560 acres of the Morey WSA recommended suitable would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws. Mining claims which have plans of operation filed would be examined to determine validity. Plans of operations for development of claims that exist at the time of designation would be processed in accordance with existing regulations.

The WSA is classified as having 3,520 acres with moderate potential for metallic mineral resources within the suitable area. There are no developed mines anticipated in the Morey WSA.

Although the nonsuitable area is classified as having 5,120 acres with moderate potential for oil and gas, and 5,120 acres with moderate potential for geothermal resources, exploration is not anticipated inside the WSA. This is based on lack of industry interest, distance to market and availability of better potential resources outside of the WSA.

Big Game Habitat Management Actions

Pinyon and juniper thinning of 1,000 acres to allow for browse re-establishment for enhancement of big game habitat by mechanical means would not be permitted on 14,560 acres recommended suitable. Prescribed burning may be done where required to maintain the natural condition of fire-dependent ecosystems.

Approximately 1,000 acres of pinyon and juniper encroachment in the area recommended nonsuitable would be thinned to allow for browse re-establishment for enhancement of big game habitat. The thinning may be done by prescribed fire or mechanical means.

Alternative A (All Wilderness)

All 20,120 acres of public land in the Morey WSA would be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation.

Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction Actions

The Morey WSA would continue to be managed for approximately 900 AUMs of livestock grazing use. Two miles of pipeline within the WSA would be maintained for livestock management purposes. No additional range developments would be constructed in the WSA.

Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

The lands within the WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use. Approximately 200 visits which occur annually within the WSA would not change.

Other Recreation

The Morey WSA would be open for management for non-motorized recreation activities including hiking, fishing, backpacking and rock climbing. Current use is estimated at about 115 visits per year within the WSA, and is expected

to increase to 200 visits per year in the foreseeable future. Hunting visits are currently estimated at about 180 and are expected to increase to 360 visits per year in the foreseeable future. No recreation facilities or trails exist in the WSA. Development of recreation facilities is not anticipated.

Mineral Resources Actions

Subject to valid existing rights, the Morey WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mining and mineral leasing laws. Validity examinations would be conducted on the mining claims which have plans of operation filed that are presently located within the WSA. Plans of operations for development of these claims and any others that exist at the time of designation would be processed in accordance with existing regulations.

The WSA is classified as having 4,160 acres with moderate potential for metallic mineral resources. There are no developed mines and none are anticipated in the Morey WSA.

A total of 5,120 acres within the WSA are rated as moderate potential for oil and gas, and also have moderate potential for geothermal resources. Exploration is not anticipated inside the WSA due to better potential deposits outside of the WSA.

Big Game Habitat Management Actions

Mechanical thinning of pinyon and juniper on 2,000 acres to allow for browse re-establishment for enhancement of big game habitat would not be permitted. Prescribed burning may be done where required to maintain the natural condition of fire-dependent ecosystems.

Alternative B (Partial Wilderness)

Under this alternative, actions include combining the Fandango WSA with the Morey WSA by closing the South Sixmile Road, adjusting boundaries closing and rehabilitating cherrystem roads.

A portion of the Fandango WSA, 31,740 acres, would be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation, combined with 14,560 acres of the Morey WSA added to the original WSA. The remaining 14,760 acres, located along the periphery of the WSAs, would be recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction Actions

Both Morey and Fandango WSAs would continue to be managed for approximately 3,061 AUMs total livestock grazing use on the combined WSAs. Five spring developments, seven miles of pipelines, and two miles of barbed wire fence

Mineral Resource Actions

Some development of the 162 existing mining claims located in the WSA is anticipated. Although there are no developed mines, one small precious metals mine is anticipated in the northeastern part of the Morey WSA. About 25 acres within the WSA will be disturbed, including one mile (1.5 acres) of road, eight acres of mine site, four acres for a mill site and 11.5 acres for tailings piles.

Potential for development of other locatable minerals is low because of moderate favorability for occurrence. Potential for development of saleable minerals is low because of the distance to markets.

The WSA is classified as having 5,120 acres of moderate potential for oil and gas occurrence in the southeast corner. There are eight oil and gas leases covering about 3,200 acres. No development is anticipated due to the availability of better potential resources outside of the WSA.

Big Game Habitat Management Actions

Approximately 2,000 acres of pinyon and juniper encroachment would be thinned by mechanical means to allow for browse re-establishment for enhancement of big game habitat.

FANDANGO WSA (NV-060-190)

Proposed Action (Partial Wilderness)

A portion of the Fandango WSA, 31,740 acres, would be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation. The remaining 9,200 acres, located along the northwestern and southern boundary of the WSA, would be recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction Actions

The Fandango WSA would continue to be managed for approximately 2,100 AUMs of livestock grazing use on three allotments. The five spring developments, five miles of pipeline, and two miles of barbed wire fence would be maintained for livestock management in the parcel recommended suitable for wilderness designation. One mile of pipeline planned in the WSA would be completed.

Recreational Off-road Vehicle Use

The 31,740 acre parcel recommended as suitable for wilderness designation would be closed to recreational ORV use. Cherrystem roads extending into the WSA from the western and eastern boundaries for a total of 11 miles and 10 miles of ways would be open to recreational ORV use. This action is anticipated to increase the recreational ORV use from 720 to 1,000 visits annually.

The 9,200 acre parcel recommended nonsuitable would remain open for ORV use. Projection estimates indicate that recreational ORV use would increase slightly in this area from 160 to 225 visits in the foreseeable future.

Other Recreation

The Fandango WSA would be open for management for non-motorized recreation activities. These include the traditional hiking, backpacking, trapping, rock and mountain climbing, plant and mineral collecting, photography, bird watching and horseback riding. Recreational use for these activities would remain at about th same level annually of 230 visits for the foreseeable future. No recreation facilities or trails exist in the WSA. Development of recreation facilities is not anticipated.

Mineral Resource Actions

Subject to valid existing rights, the 31,740 acres of the Fandango WSA recommended suitable would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws. Mining claims which have plans of operation filed would be examined to determine validity. Plans of operations for development of claims that exist at the time of designation would be processed in accordance with existing regulations.

The WSA is classified as having low potential for metallic mineral resources. Although the area is classified as having 8,640 acres with moderate potential for oil and gas, and 480 acres with moderate potential for geothermal resources, exploration is not anticipated inside the WSA. Higher potential resources are available outside the WSA and closer to markets.

Big Game Habitat Management Actions

Pinyon and juniper thinning by mechanical means on 1,500 acres to allow for browse re-establishment would not be permitted. Prescribed burning may be done where required to maintain the natural condition of fire-dependent ecosystems.

Alternative A (All Wilderness)

All 40,940 acres of public land in the Fandango WSA would be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation.

Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction Actions

The Fandango WSA would continue to be managed for approximately 2,100 AUMs of livestock grazing use. Two miles of existing fence, five miles of pipeline, and five spring developments within the WSA would be maintained for livestock management purposes. An additional one mile of pipeline would be constructed in the WSA.

Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

The Fandango WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use. This action would eliminate the current recreational ORV of 720 visits that is estimated to occur in the area annually.

Other Recreation

Non-motorized recreation activities including the traditional hiking, backpacking, trapping, rock and mountain climbing, plant and mineral collecting, photography, bird watching and horseback riding would continue. Current use is estimated at about 720 visits per year within the WSA, and is expected to increase to 1,000 visits per year in the foreseeable future. No recreation facilities or trails exist in the WSA. Development of recreation facilities is not anticipated.

Mineral Resources Actions

Subject to valid existing rights, the Fandango WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mining and mineral leasing laws. Validity examinations would be conducted on mining claims which have plans of operation filed that are presently located within the WSA. Plans of operations for development of claims that exist at the time of designation would be processed in accordance with existing regulations.

The WSA is classified as having low potential for metallic mineral resources. Although the area is classified as having 8,640 acres of potential moderate potential for oil and gas, and 480 acres with moderate potential for geothermal resources, exploration is not anticipated inside the WSA. There are better potential resources outside the WSA and closer to market.

Big Game Habitat Management Actions

Pinyon and juniper thinning on 1,500 acres to allow for browse re-establishment by mechanical means would not be permitted. Prescribed burning may be done where required to maintain the natural condition of fire-dependent ecosystems.

Alternative B (Partial Wilderness)

In this alternative, actions include combining the Fandango WSA with the Morey WSA by closing the South Sixmile Road, adjusting boundaries, and closing and rehabilitating cherrystem roads.

A portion of the Fandango WSA, 31,740 acres, would be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation, including 14,560 acres of the Morey WSA added to the original WSA. The remaining 9,200 acres, located along the periphery of the WSAs, would be recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction Actions

Both Fandango and Morey WSAs would continue to be managed for approximately 3,000 AUMs total of livestock grazing use. Five spring developments, seven miles of pipeline, and two miles of barbed wire fence would be maintained for livestock management in the parcel recommended suitable for wilderness designation. The one mile of pipeline planned in the Fandango WSA would be completed.

Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

The 46,300 acre parcel recommended as suitable for wilderness designation would be closed to recreational ORV use. Cherrystem roads extending into the WSA from the northern and western boundaries for a total of twelve miles and fourteen miles of ways would be closed to recreational ORV use. This action would reduce the current recreational ORV use that is estimated to occur annually in the area from 920 to 410 visits.

The 14,760 acre parcel recommended nonsuitable would remain open for ORV use. Projection estimates indicate that recreational ORV use would not increase in the foreseeable future.

Other Recreation

Both Fandango and Morey WSAs would be managed for non-motorized recreation activities. These include the traditional hiking, backpacking, trapping, rock and mountain climbing, plant and mineral collecting, photography, bird watching and horseback riding. Recreational use for these activities would remain at the low level annually for the foreseeable future. No recreation facilities or trails exist in the WSA. Development of recreation facilities is not anticipated because of the low use the area receives.

Mineral Resource Actions

Subject to valid existing rights, the 46,300 acres of both WSAs recommended suitable would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws. Mining claims which have plans of operation filed would be examined to determine validity. Plans of operations for development of claims and any others that exist at the time of designation would be processed in accordance with existing regulations.

The northeast part of the Morey WSA is classified as having 4,160 acres with moderate potential for metallic mineral resources. There are no developed mines and none are anticipated in the Morey WSA.

Although the area is classified as having 5,120 acres with moderate potential for oil and gas and geothermal resources, exploration is not anticipated inside the WSA. This is based on lack of industry interest, distance to market, and availability of higher potential resources outside of the WSA.

Big Game Habitat Management Actions

Pinyon and juniper thinning of 2,500 acres to allow for browse re-establishment by mechanical means would not be permitted on the 46,300 acres recommended suitable for wilderness designation.

Approximately 1,000 acres of pinyon and juniper encroachment would be thinned by mechanical means to allow for browse re-establishment on 14,740 acres recommended nonsuitable.

Alternative C (No Wilderness)

All 40,940 acres of public land in the Fandango WSA would be recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction Actions

The Fandango WSA would continue to be managed for livestock grazing use. Two miles of existing fence, five miles of pipeline, and five spring developments within the WSA would be maintained for livestock management purposes. One mile of pipeline would be constructed in the WSA.

Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

The lands within the WSA would remain open to recreation ORV use. Approximately 710 visits of ORV use occurs annually within the WSA. This is expected to increase to about 1,000 visits per year in the foreseeable future.

There are 15 miles of vehicle ways within the boundary of the WSA which provide access for ORV enthusiasts. No other development of roads or ways is anticipated because of the low use the area receives.

Other Recreation

The Fandango WSA would be open to other recreation activities in addition to recreation ORV use. These activities would include hunting and hunting-related horseback riding and camping. Current use is estimated at about 230 visits per year within the WSA, and is expected to increase to 390 visits per year in the foreseeable future. Hunting visits are currently estimated to be about 310 visits and are expected to increase to 700 visits per year in the foreseeable future. No recreation facilities or trails exist in the WSA. Development of recreation facilities is not anticipated.

Mineral Resource Actions

No development of the 40 existing mining claims located in the WSA is anticipated. No validity determinations would be required.

Potential for development of other locatable minerals is low because of low favorability for occurrence. Potential for development of saleable minerals is low because of the distance to markets.

The WSA is classified as having 8,640 acres with moderate potential for oil and gas occurrence in the northwest corner. There are six oil and gas leases covering about 7,680 acres. No development of these is expected inside the WSA.

Big Game Habitat Management Actions

Approximately 1,500 acres of pinyon and juniper encroachment would be thinned by mechanical means to allow for browse re-establishment, and enhancement of big game habitat.

PALISADE MESA (NV-060-142/162)

Proposed Action (Partial Wilderness)

A portion of the Palisade Mesa WSA, 66,110 acres, would be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation. The remaining 33,440 acres, located along the western and southern boundary of the WSA, would be recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction Actions

The Palisade Mesa WSA would continue to be managed for approximately 3,400 AUMs of livestock grazing use on four allotments. The five spring developments and water impoundment would be maintained for livestock management in the parcel recommended suitable for wilderness designation. The three miles of fence planned in the WSA would be completed.

Recreational Off-road Vehicle Use

The 66,110 acre parcel recommended as suitable for wilderness designation would be closed to recreational ORV use. Fifteen miles of ways would be open to recreational ORV use. This action is anticipated to not change the recreational ORV use from 500 visits annually.

The 33,440 acre parcel recommended nonsuitable would remain open for ORV use. Projection estimates indicate that recreational ORV use would remain at the level of 100 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

Other Recreation

The Palisade Mesa WSA would be open for non-motorized recreation activities. These include hiking, photography, and sightseeing. Recreational use for these activities would remain about 350 visits per year for the foreseeable future within the WSA. Hunting visits are currently estimated to be about 6 visits and are expected to increase to 19 visits per year in the foreseeable future. No recreation facilities or trails exist in the WSA. Development of recreation facilities is not anticipated.

Mineral Resource Actions

Subject to valid existing rights, the 66,110 acres of the Palisade Mesa WSA recommended suitable would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws. One mining claim would be examined to determine validity. Plans of operations for development of this claim at the time of designation would be processed in accordance with existing regulations.

The WSA is classified as having 4,800 acres with moderate potential for metallic mineral resources. Although the nonsuitable area is classified as having 7,360 acres with moderate potential for oil and gas, exploration is not anticipated inside the WSA. This is based on distance to market and availability of better potential resources outside of the WSA.

Alternative A (All Wilderness)

All 99,950 acres of public land in the Palisade Mesa WSA would be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation.

Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction Actions

The Palisade Mesa WSA would continue to be managed for approximately 3,400 AUMs of livestock grazing use. A five-acre water impoundment and five spring developments within the WSA would be maintained for livestock management purposes. Three miles of fence would be constructed in the WSA.

Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

The Palisade Mesa WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use. This action would eliminate the current recreational ORV use of 500 visits annually that is estimated to occur in the area.

Other Recreation

The Palisade Mesa WSA would be open for non-motorized recreation activities including hiking, photography, and sightseeing. Recreational use for these activities would not change, but would remain at about 500 visits per year within the WSA for the foreseeable future. Hunting use is currently estimated to be about 6 visits annually and is expected to increase to 19 visits per year in the foreseeable future. No recreation facilities or trails exist in the WSA. Development of recreation facilities is not anticipated.

Mineral Resources Actions

Subject to valid existing rights, the Palisade Mesa WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mining and mineral leasing laws. Validity examinations would be conducted on the two mining claims that are presently located within the WSA at the time of designation. No mineral development is anticipated in the WSA.

The WSA is classified as having 8,960 acres with moderate potential for metallic mineral resources and 7,360 acres rated as moderate potential for oil and gas. No exploration is expected inside the WSA due to better potential resources outside of the WSA.

Alternative B (Partial Wilderness)

Under this alternative, actions combining the Palisade Mesa WSA with The Wall WSA by closing the common boundary road, adjusting boundaries, and closing and rehabilitating eight miles of cherrystem roads.

A portion of the Palisade Mesa WSA, 83,550 acres, and 30,320 acres of The Wall WSA for a total of 113,870 acres would be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation. The remaining 23,680 acres, located along the periphery of the WSAs, would be recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction Actions

Both Palisade Mesa and The Wall WSAs would continue to be managed for approximately 4,500 AUMs total of livestock grazing use. One spring development and water impoundment, and a barbed wire fence would be maintained for livestock management in the parcel recommended suitable for wilderness designation. The three miles of fence planned in the WSA would be completed.

Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

The 113,870 acre parcel recommended as suitable for wilderness designation would be closed to recreational ORV use. Cherrystem roads extending into the WSA from the northern and western boundaries for a total of eight miles and ten miles of ways would be closed to recreational ORV use. This action is anticipated to reduce the recreational ORV use from 760 to 550 visits annually.

The 23,680 acre parcel recommended nonsuitable would continue to be managed for ORV use. Projection estimates indicate that recreational ORV use would remain at about 300 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

Other Recreation

Both Palisade Mesa and The Wall WSAs would be managed for non-motorized recreation activities. These include limited hunting, photography, hiking, and sightseeing. Current use is estimated at about 470 visits per year within the WSA. These visits are not expected to increase in the foreseeable future. Hunting visits are currently estimated to be about 9 visits and are not expected to increase in the foreseeable future. No recreation facilities or trails exist in the WSA. Development of recreation facilities is not anticipated.

Mineral Resource Actions

Subject to valid existing rights, the 113,870 acres of both WSAs recommended suitable would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws. The portion recommended suitable has one mining claim and 31 oil and gas leases covering 25,280 acres. This mining claim would be examined to determine validity. Plans of operation for development of this claim at the time of designation would be processed in accordance with existing regulations.

The southwest part of the Palisade Mesa WSA is classified as having 7,680 acres with moderate potential for metallic mineral resources, however, exploration or development is not anticipated inside the WSA.

Alternative C (No Wilderness)

All 99,550 acres of public land in the Palisade Mesa WSA would be recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

Grazing Facility maintenance and Construction Actions

The Palisade Mesa WSA would continue to be managed for approximately 3,400 AUMs of livestock grazing use. Three mile of fence would be constructed in the WSA.

Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

The lands within the WSA would remain open to recreational ORV use. No change in the current recreation visitor use is anticipated.

There are 20 miles of vehicle ways within the boundary of the WSA which provide access for ORV enthusiasts. No development of additional roads or ways is anticipated.

Other Recreation

The Palisade Mesa WSA would be open to other recreation activities in addition to recreation ORV use. These activities would include sightseeing, hiking, and photography. Current use is estimated at about 350 visits per year within the WSA, and is expected to increase to 380 visits per year in the foreseeable future. Hunting visits are currently estimated to be about 6 visits and are expected to increase to 19 visits per year in the foreseeable future. No recreation facilities or trails exist in the WSA. Development of recreation facilities is not anticipated.

Mineral Resource Actions

No development of the existing mining claim located in the WSA is anticipated.

Potential for development of other locatable minerals is low because of moderate favorability for occurrence. Potential for development of saleable minerals is low because of the distance to markets.

The WSA is classified as having 7,360 acres with moderate potential for oil and gas occurrence in the southeast corner. There are thirty oil and gas leases covering about 38,400 acres. No development of these is anticipated due to availability of better potential resources outside of the WSA.

THE WALL (NV-060-163)

Proposed Action (Partial Wilderness)

A portion of The Wall WSA, 30,320 acres, would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation. The remaining 7,680 acres, along the eastern boundary of the WSA, would be recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction Actions

The Wall WSA would continue to be managed for approximately 1,100 AUMs of livestock grazing use. One spring development and a mile of fence would be maintained for livestock management in the parcel recommended suitable for wilderness designation.

Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

The 30,320-acre parcel recommended as suitable for wilderness designation would be closed to recreational ORV use. One mile of road would be open to recreational ORV use. This action would not change the current recreational ORV use of 110 visits annually.

The 7,680-acre parcel recommended nonsuitable would remain open for ORV use. Projection estimates indicate that recreational ORV use would would remain at the current level for the foreseeable future.

Other Recreation

The Wall WSA would be open for non-motorized hunter use. Current use is estimated at about 120 visits per year within the WSA, and is expected to increase to 130 per year in the foreseeable future. Hunting visits are currently estimated to be about three visits and are expected to increase to nine visits per year in the foreseeable future. No recreation facilities or trails exist in the WSA. Development of recreation facilities is not anticipated.

Mineral Resource Actions

Subject to valid existing rights, the 30,320 acres of The Wall WSA recommended suitable would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws. There are no mining claims in The Wall WSA.

The WSA is classified as having low potential for metallic mineral resources, oil and gas, and geothermal resources. Exploration or development is not anticipated inside the WSA.

Alternative A (All Wilderness)

All 38,000 acres of public land in The Wall WSA would be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation.

Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction Actions

The Wall WSA would continue to be managed for approximately 1,100 AUMs of livestock grazing use. One spring development and one mile of fence within the WSA would be maintained for livestock management purposes. No additional range developments would be constructed in the WSA.

Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

The Wall WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use. Approximately 260 visits which occur annually within the WSA would be reduced to about 110 visits annually.

Other Recreation

The Wall WSA would be open for non-motorized hunter use. Recreational use for this activity would not change, but would remain at the same level of 120 visits annually for the foreseeable future. No recreation facilities or trails exist in the WSA and none are planned. Development of recreation facilities is not anticipated because of the low use the area receives.

Mineral Resources Actions

Subject to valid existing rights, The Wall WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mining and mineral leasing laws. No mineral development in the WSA is anticipated.

Alternative B (Partial Wilderness)

Under this alternative, actions include combining the Palisade Mesa WSA with The Wall WSA by closing the common boundary road, adjusting boundaries closing and rehabilitating eight miles of cherrystem roads.

A portion of the Palisade Mesa WSA, 83,550 acres, would be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation, including 30,320 acres of The Wall WSA added to the original WSA for a total of 113,870 acres. The remaining 23,680 acres, located along the periphery of the WSAs, would be recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction Actions

Both Palisade Mesa and The Wall WSAs would continue to be managed for livestock grazing use. A total of approximately 4,500 AUMs of use would occur within the WSA. The spring developments, water impoundment, and barbed wire fence would be maintained for livestock management purposes in the parcel recommended suitable for wilderness designation. Three miles of fence planned for the WSA would be completed.

Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

The 113,870 acre parcel recommended as suitable for wilderness designation would be closed to recreational ORV use. Cherrystem roads extending into the WSA from the northern and western boundaries for a total of eight miles and ten miles of ways would be closed to recreational ORV use. This action would slightly reduce the current recreational ORV use from 760 to 550 visits annually.

The 23,680 acre parcel recommended nonsuitable would remain open for ORV use. Projection estimates indicate that recreational ORV use, but would remain at the current level annually for the foreseeable future.

Other Recreation

Both Palisade Mesa and The Wall WSAs would be open for non-motorized recreation activities. These include hunting, photography, hiking, and sightseeing. Current use is estimated at about 470 visits per year within the WSAs. No increase in use is expected in the foreseeable future. Hunting visits are currently estimated to be about 9 visits annually and are not expected to increase in the foreseeable future. No recreation facilities or trails exist in the WSA. Development of recreation facilities is not anticipated.

Mineral Resource Actions

Subject to valid existing rights, the 113,870 acres of both WSAs recommended suitable would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws. The portion recommended suitable has one mining claim and 31 oil and gas leases covering 25,280 acres. This mining claim would be examined to determine validity. Plans of operation for development of this claim at the time of designation would be processed in accordance with existing regulations.

The southwest part of the Palisade Mesa WSA is classified as having 7,680 acres with moderate potential for metallic mineral resources, however, exploration is not anticipated inside the WSA.

Alternative C (No Wilderness)

All 38,000 acres of public land in The Wall WSA would be recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction Actions

The Wall WSA would continue to be managed for approximately 1,100 AUMs of livestock grazing use. One spring development and a mile of fence within the WSA would be maintained for livestock management purposes. No additional range developments would be constructed in the WSA.

Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

The lands within the WSA would remain open to recreation ORV use. Approximately 260 visits of ORV use occurs annually within the WSA. This use is expected to increase to 300 visits per year in the foreseeable future.

There are five miles of vehicle ways within the boundary of the WSA which provide access for ORV enthusiasts. No other development of roads or ways is anticipated because of the low use the area receives.

Other Recreation

The Wall WSA would be open for management of non-motorized recreation use. Current use is estimated at about 120 visits per year within the WSA, and is expected to increase to 130 per year in the foreseeable future. Hunting visits are currently estimated at about 3 visits annually and are expected to increase to 9 visits per year in the foreseeable future. No recreation facilities or trails exist in the WSA. Development of recreation facilities is not anticipated.

Mineral Resource Actions

There are no mining claims located in the WSA, and the area is classified as having low potential for metallic mineral resources.

The WSA is classified as having a low favorability for oil and gas occurrence. There are twenty-one oil and gas leases covering about 24,320 acres, however, no exploration or development is anticipated.

SOUTH REVEILLE (NV-060-112)

Proposed Action (Partial Wilderness)

A portion of the South Reveille WSA, 33,000 acres, would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation. The remaining 73,200 acres, located around the periphery of the WSA, would be recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction Actions

The South Reveille WSA would continue to be managed for approximately 4,800 AUMs of livestock grazing use. A water impoundment and five spring developments would be maintained for livestock management in the parcel recommended suitable for wilderness designation. Two wells and two spring developments, planned for the WSA would be completed.

Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

The 33,000-acre parcel recommended as suitable for wilderness designation would be closed to recreational ORV use not including one mile of way. This action would not change the current recreational ORV use in the area of 1,000 visits per year.

The 73,200-acre parcel recommended nonsuitable would remain open for ORV use. Projection estimates indicate that recreational ORV use, but would remain at the current level annually for the foreseeable future on this area.

Other Recreation

The South Reveille WSA would be open for non-motorized recreation activities. These include hunting, hiking, backpacking, horseback riding and mountain climbing. Current use is estimated at about 140 visits per year within the WSA, and is expected to decrease to 90 per year in the foreseeable future. Hunting visits are currently estimated to be about ten visits and are not expected to increase in the foreseeable future. No recreation facilities or trails exist in the WSA. Development of recreation facilities is not anticipated.

Mineral Resource Actions

Subject to valid existing rights, the 33,000 acres of the South Reveille WSA recommended suitable would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws. These are three mining claims within the WSA. Those which have plans of operation filed would be examined to determine validity. Plans of operations for development of claims that exist at the time of designation would be processed in accordance with existing regulations.

The nonsuitable portion of the WSA is classified as having 28,160 acres with moderate potential for metallic mineral resources. Although there are no developed mines, one small precious metals mine is anticipated in the northern part of the South Reveille WSA. About 10 acres within the WSA would be disturbed, including one mile (1.5 acres) of one acre of mine site, three acres for the mill site and 4.5 acres of tailings.

The area is classified as having 55,000 acres of moderate potential for oil and gas. It is assumed that there would be a small producing potential oil field, in the foreseeable future. About 40 acres inside the WSA would be disturbed, including the 3 miles (5 acres) of roads, 20 acres of storage, and 15 acres for load out facilities.

High Erosion Potential Watershed Actions

About 23,800 acres of the South Reveille WSA have been identified as high erosion potential watershed. Under this alternative, 18,000 acres would be within the proposed wilderness area and would be protected from excessive erosion. On the remaining 5,800 acres it is anticipated that mining development of about 10 acres would occur. The activities or projects associated with the development of the mine would be handled on a case-by-case basis to protect this watershed from excessive erosion.

Alternative A (All Wilderness)

All 106,200 acres of public land in the South Reveille WSA would be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation.

Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction Actions

The South Reveille WSA would continue to be managed for approximately 4,800 AUMs of livestock grazing use. The five spring developments and water impoundment within the WSA would be maintained for livestock management purposes. Two new spring developments would be constructed in the WSA.

Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

The South Reveille WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use. The approximately 2,000 visits which occur annually within the WSA would be foregone.

Other Recreation

The South Reveille WSA would be open for non-motorized recreation activities including hunting, hiking, backpacking, horseback riding and mountain climbing. Current use is estimated at about 140 visits per year within the WSA, and is expected to decrease to 90 visits per year in the foreseeable future. Hunting visits are currently estimated to be at ten visits annually and are not expected to increase in the foreseeable future. No recreation facilities or trails exist in the WSA. Development of recreation facilities is not anticipated.

Mineral Resources Actions

Subject to valid existing rights, the South Reveille WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mining and mineral leasing laws. Validity examinations would be conducted on the mining claims which have plans of operation filed that are presently located within the WSA. Plans of operation for development of claims that exist at the time of designation would be processed in accordance with existing regulations. Although there are no developed mines, one precious metals mine is anticipated in the northern part of the WSA. About ten acres within the WSA will be disturbed including one mile (1.5 acres) of road, one acre for the mine, three acres of mill site and 4.5 acres for tailings.

The area is classified as having 55,000 acres moderately favorable for oil and gas. There would be no exploration or development allowed in the foreseeable future.

High Erosion Potential Watersheds Actions

About 23,800 acres of the South Reveille WSA have been identified as a high erosion potential watershed. Under this alternative, it is anticipated that a small mining development on 10 acres would be developed. The activities or projects associated with the development would be handled on a case-by-case basis to protect the watershed from excessive erosion.

Alternative C (No Wilderness)

All 106,200 acres of public land in the South Reveille WSA would be recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction Actions

The South Reveille WSA would continue to be managed for approximately 4,800 AUMs of livestock grazing use. The five spring developments and water impoundment within the WSA would be maintained for livestock management purposes. Two new spring developments would be constructed in the WSA.

Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

The lands within the WSA would remain open to recreational ORV use. Approximately 2,000 visits of ORV use occurs annually within the WSA. This use is expected to increase to about 3,700 visits per year in the foreseeable future.

There are five miles of vehicle ways within the boundary of the WSA which provide access for ORV enthusiasts. No other development of roads or ways is anticipated.

Other Recreation

The South Reveille WSA would be open for non-motorized recreation activities in addition to recreational ORV use. These activities would include hunting, hiking, backpacking, horseback riding and mountain climbing. Current use is estimated at about 140 visits per year within the WSA, and is expected to increase to 240 per year in the foreseeable future. Hunting visits are currently estimated to be about ten visits and are not expected to increase in the foreseeable future. No recreation facilities or trails exist in the WSA. Development of recreation facilities is not anticipated.

Mineral Resources Actions

Although there are no developed mines, one small precious metals mine is anticipated in the northern part of the WSA. About ten acres within the WSA will be disturbed, including one mile (1.5 acres) of road, one acre for the mine, three acres of mill site and 4.5 acres for tailings.

The area is classified as having 55,000 acres moderately valuable for oil and gas. It is assumed that there would be a small producing oil field in the foreseeable future. About 40 acres inside the WSA would be disturbed including the three miles (5 acres) of roads, 20 acres of storage, and 15 acres for load out facilities.

Hardrock exploration is anticipated at the rate of two Notices of Intent per year. The disturbance is estimated about five acres for each development.

High Erosion Potential Watersheds Actions

About 23,800 acres of the South Reveille WSA have been identified as a high erosion potential watershed. Under this alternative no additional protection would be provided. Activities or projects would be handled on a case-by-case basis to protect this watershed from excessive erosion.

Proposed Action (Partial Wilderness)

A portion of the Blue Eagle WSA, 58,350 acres, would be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation, incuding 750 acres added to the original. The remaining 1,960 acres, located along the western boundary of the WSA, would be recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction Actions

The Blue Eagle WSA would continue to be managed for approximately 1,100 AUMs of livestock grazing use. The five spring developments would be maintained for livestock management purposes in the parcel recommended suitable for wilderness designation. The spring development and six miles of pipeline planned in the WSA would be completed.

Recreational Off-road Vehicle Use

The 58,350 acre parcel recommended as suitable for wilderness designation would be closed to recreational ORV use. Twelve miles of ways and five miles of cherrystem roads would be open to recreational ORV use. This action is not anticipated to change the recreational ORV use from 670 visits annually.

The 1,960 acre parcel recommended nonsuitable would remain open for ORV use. Projection estimates indicate that recreational ORV use would not change, but would remain at the same level annually for the foreseeable future.

Other Recreation

The Blue Eagle WSA would be open for non-motorized recreation activities. These include backpacking, hiking, and mountain climbing. Current use is estimated at about 320 visits per year within the WSA. Other recreation visits are expected to decrease to 290 per year in the foreseeable future. Hunting visits are currently estimated to be about 40 visits and are not expected to increase in the foreseeable future. No recreation facilities or trails exist in the WSA. Development of recreation facilities is not anticipated.

Mineral Resource Actions

Subject to valid existing rights, the 58,350 acres of the Blue Eagle WSA recommended suitable would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws. Seventy-six mining claims are located within the WSA. Those claims which have plans of operation filed would be examined to determine validity. Plans of operations for development of

claims that exist at the time of designation would be processed in accordance with existing regulations. Approximately 39,720 acres of the portion recommended suitable are covered by 17 oil and gas leases.

The nonsuitable portion of the WSA is classified as having 960 acres with moderate potential for metallic mineral resources and 2,000 acres rated as high potential for oil and gas. Because the area is classified as being highly valuable for oil and gas, it is assumed there would be a small producing oil field in the foreseeable future. About 50 acres inside the WSA would be disturbed, including three miles (5 acres) of roads, 30 acres for storage, and 15 acres of load out facilities.

Alternative A (All Wilderness)

All 59,560 acres of public land in the Blue Eagle WSA would be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation.

Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction Actions

The Blue Eagle WSA would continue to be managed for approximately 1,100 AUMs of livestock grazing use. Five spring developments within the WSA would be maintained for livestock management purposes. One spring development and six miles of pipeline would be constructed in the WSA.

Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

The lands within the WSA would be closed to recreational ORV use. The approximately 670 visits which occur annually within the WSA would be foregone.

Other Recreation

The Blue Eagle WSA would be open for non-motorized recreation activities including backpacking, hiking and mountain climbing. Current use is estimated at about 320 visits per year within the WSA, and is expected to decrease to 290 per year in the foreseeable future. Hunting visits are currently estimated at about 40 visits annually and are not expected to increase in the foreseeable future. No recreation facilities or trails exist in the WSA. Development of recreation facilities is not anticipated.

Mineral Resources Actions

Subject to valid existing rights, the Blue Eagle WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mining and mineral leasing laws. Validity examinations would be conducted on the mining claims which have plans of operation filed that are presently located within the WSA. No development of mineral claims that currently exist in the WSA is anticipated. About 2,000 acres rated as high potential for oil and gas, would be foregone.

Alternative B (Partial Wilderness)

Under this alternative, actions include adjusting boundaries and closing and rehabilitating eight miles of cherrystem roads.

A portion of the Blue Eagle WSA would be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation, including 750 acres added to the original WSA for a total of 59,350 acres. The remaining 960 acres, located along the west side of the WSA, would be recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction Actions

The Blue Eagle WSA would continue to be managed for approximately 1,100 AUMs of livestock grazing use. The five spring developments would be maintained for livestock management in the parcel recommended suitable for wilderness designation. One spring development and six miles of pipeline planned in the WSA would be completed.

Recreational Off-road Vehicle Use

The 59,350 acre parcel recommended as suitable for wilderness designation would be closed to recreational ORV use. Cherrystem roads extending into the WSA from the northern and eastern boundaries for a total of six miles and twelve miles of ways would be closed to recreational ORV use. This action would reduce the recreational ORV use from 670 to 530 visits annually.

The 960 acre parcel recommended nonsuitable would remain open for ORV use. Projection estimates indicate that recreational ORV use, but would remain at the current level annually for the foreseeable future.

Other Recreation

The Blue Eagle WSA would be open for non-motorized recreation activities. These include backpacking, hiking, and mountain climbing. Current use is estimated at about 320 visits per year within the WSA. Other recreation visits are expected to decrease to 290 per year in the foreseeable future. Hunting visits are currently estimated at about 40 visits annually and are not

expected to increase in the foreseeable future. No recreation facilities or trails exist in the WSA. Development of recreation facilities is not anticipated.

Mineral Resource Actions

Subject to valid existing rights, the 59,350 acres recommended suitable would be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mineral leasing and mining laws. There are 148 mining claims within the WSA. Those claims which have plans of operation filed would be examined to determine validity. Plans of operations for development of claims that exist at the time of designation would be processed in accordance with existing regulations. Approximately 42,280 acres of the portion recommended suitable are covered by 20 oil and gas leases.

The northwest part of the Blue Eagle WSA is classified as having 960 acres with moderate potential for metallic mineral resources. The southwest area recommended nonsuitable, is classified as having 2,000 acres of high potential for oil and gas. It is assumed there would be a small producing oil field in the foreseeable future. About 50 acres inside the WSA would be disturbed, including 3 miles (5 acres) of roads, 30 acres of storage, and 15 acre for load out facilities.

Alternative C (No Wilderness)

All 59,560 acres of public land in the Blue Eagle WSA would be recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

Livestock grazing and Range Management Actions

The Blue Eagle WSA would continue to be managed for livestock grazing use. Five spring developments within the WSA would be maintained for livestock management purposes. A spring development and six miles of pipeline would be constructed in the WSA and maintenance activities would not change.

Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

The lands within the WSA would remain open to recreation ORV use. Approximately 670 visits or ORV use occurs annually within the WSA. ORV use is expected to increase to 990 visits per year in the foreseeable future.

There are 15 miles of vehicle ways within the boundary of the WSA. Development of roads or ways is anticipated because of the exploration for minerals and exploration and development of oil and gas facilities.

Other Recreation

The Blue Eagle WSA would be open to other recreation activities in addition to recreational ORV use. These activities would include backpacking, hiking, and mountain climbing. Current use is estimated at about 670 visits per year within the WSA, and is expected to increase to 990 visits per year in the foreseeable future. Hunting visits are currently estimated to be about 40 visits and are expected to increase to 65 visits per year in the foreseeable future. No recreation facilities or trails exist in the WSA. Development of recreation facilities is not anticipated.

Mineral Resource Actions

No development of the 148 existing mining claims located in the WSA is anticipated. No validity examinations would be required.

Potential for development of other locatable minerals is low because of low favorability for occurrence. Potential for development of saleable minerals is low because of the distance to markets.

The WSA is classified as having 2,000 acres with high potential for oil and gas occurrence in the northwest and southwest corners. There are 29 oil and gas leases covering about 46,760 acres. It is assumed there would be a small producing oil field in the foreseeable future. About 50 acres inside the WSA would be disturbed, three miles (5 acres) of roads, 30 acres of storage, and 15 acres for load out facilities.

COMPARATIVE SUMMARY TABLE OF IMPACTS
ALTERNATIVES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE	PROPOSED ACTION (No Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE A (All Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE B (Partial Wilderness)
		KAWICH	
Impact on Wilderness Values	The Kawich WSA's wilderness values of size, naturalness, and outstanding opportunities for solitude would be lost.	Wilderness values would be slightly enhanced on most of the 54,320 acres of the Kawich WSA. The wilderness values of naturalness, and solitude would be lost on approximately 35 acres in the areas of mineral development.	On the 45,220 acres designated wilderness, naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude would improve slightly. The wilderness values of naturalness and solitude would be lost on 35 acres in the areas of mineral development. On the 9,600 acres not designated wilderness, there would be a slight reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitude.
Impact on Recreational ORV Use	Recreational ORV use would remain below 1,300 visits annually. There would be a slight increase in recreational ORV use.	Recreational ORV use of 500 visits would be foregone annually. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.	Recreational ORV use would be foregone on the 45,220 acres designated wilderness and 500 visits would be foregone annually. On the 9,600 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness, recreational ORV use would increase.

COMPARATIVE SUMMARY TABLE OF IMPACTS
ALTERNATIVES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE	PROPOSED ACTION (No Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE A (All Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE B (Partial Wilderness)
	KAWICH (continued)		
Impacts on Development of Mineral Resources	There would probably be an acceleration of exploration and development of precious metals resources in the Kawich WSA.	No impact to development of precious metals resources would occur. Exploration would be foregone on 51,320 acres of the WSA.	No impacts to precious metals development would occur. Exploration would be foregone on 45,220 acres recommended suitable for wilderness designation.
Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction	There would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance or construction in the Kawich WSA.	There would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance or construction.	There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and construction.
Impacts on Mule Deer Population	The impact of mineral and energy exploration and development could reduce the mule deer population.	Mule deer population are expected to increase. Mechanical manipulation of 9,000 acres would be foregone.	The overall impact of wilderness designation of 45,220 acres would be beneficial to big game habitat. Nondesignation of 9,600 acres would result in a reduction in mule deer population.

COMPARATIVE SUMMARY TABLE OF IMPACTS
ALTERNATIVES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE	PROPOSED ACTION (No Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE A (All Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE B (Partial Wilderness)
		RAWHIDE MOUNTAIN	
Impacts on Wilderness Values	The Rawhide Mountain WSA's wilderness values of size, naturalness, and outstanding opportunities for solitude would be lost.	Wilderness values would be slightly enhanced on all 64,360 acres of the Rawhide Mountain WSA. The wilderness values of naturalness and solitude would be lost in the areas of mineral development.	On the 41,960 acres designated wilderness, the area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude would improve slightly. The wilderness values of naturalness and solitude would be lost in the areas of mineral development. On the 22,400 acres not designated wilderness, there would be a slight reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitude.
Impact on Recreational ORV use	Recreational ORV use would remain below 1,500 visits annually. There would be no impact on recreational ORV use.	Recreational ORV use of 1,000 visits would be foregone annually. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.	Recreational ORV use would be foregone on the 41,960 acres designated wilderness and 800 visits would be foregone annually. On the 22,400 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness, recreational ORV use would continue to increase, but would not exceed 1,000 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

COMPARATIVE SUMMARY TABLE OF IMPACTS
ALTERNATIVES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE	PROPOSED ACTION (No Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE A (All Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE B (Partial Wilderness)
	RAWHIDE MOUNTAIN (continued)		
Impact on Development of Mineral Resources	There would be no impact to development or exploration of mineral resources.	No impact to precious metals resource development would occur. Exploration would be foregone on 64,360 acres.	No impact to development of precious metals would occur. Exploration would be foregone on 41,960 acres recommended suitable or wilderness designation.
Impact on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction	There would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance or construction in the Rawhide Mountain WSA.	A proposed well could not be developed in the WSA.	There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and construction.

COMPARATIVE SUMMARY TABLE OF IMPACTS
ALTERNATIVES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE	PROPOSED ACTION (Partial Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE A (All Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE B (Partial Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE C (No Wilderness)
		MOREY		
Impact on Wilderness Values	On the 14,560 acres designated wilderness, wilderness values of the Bristlecone pine, bighorn sheep habitat, South Sixmile Canyon and the proposed National Natural Landmark areas would be protected. There would be a slight reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitude because of continued recreational ORV use.	On 20,120 acres of the WSA, there would be a slight improvement of the area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude.	On the 46,300 acres designated wilderness, the area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude would improve slightly. The Bristlecone pine, bighorn sheep habitat, South Sixmile Canyon and the proposed National Natural Landmark areas would be protected. On the 14,760 acres not designated wilderness, there would be a slight reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitude.	On 20,120 acres of the WSA, the area's naturalness and opportunities for solitude would be lost in the northeastern part of the WSA due to increasing recreational ORV use and mineral development.

COMPARATIVE SUMMARY TABLE OF IMPACTS
ALTERNATIVES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE	PROPOSED ACTION (Partial Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE A (All Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE B (Partial Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE C (No Wilderness)
		MOREY (continued)		
Impact on Recreational ORV Use	Recreational ORV use of 150 visits annually would be foregone on the 14,560 acres designated wilderness. The one mile of road within the designated area would remain open. On the 5,560 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness, recreational ORV use would continue to increase, but would not exceed 50 visits annually for the foreseeable future.	Recreational ORV use of 200 visits annually would be foregone on the 20,120 acres designated wilderness.	Recreational ORV use would be foregone on the 46,300 acres designated wilderness and 500 visits would be foregone annually. On the 14,760 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness, recreational ORV use would continue to increase, but would not exceed 1,000 visits annually for the foreseeable future.	There would be no impact on recreational ORV use.
Impact on Development of Mineral Resources	Exploration and development of one small precious metals mine would be foregone.	Exploration and development of one small precious metals mine would be foregone.	Exploration and development of a small precious metals mine would be foregone.	There would be no impact to development of mineral resources.

COMPARATIVE SUMMARY TABLE OF IMPACTS
ALTERNATIVES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE	PROPOSED ACTION (Partial Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE A (All Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE B (Partial Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE C (No Wilderness)
		MOREY (continued)		
Impact on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction	There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and construction. All anticipated facilities have been completed and maintenance will be performed.	There would be no impacts on grazing facility maintenance or construction.	There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and construction.	There would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance and construction.
Impact on Mule Deer Population	The overall impact of wilderness designation of 14,560 acres would be beneficial to mule deer population. Non-designation of 5,560 acres would result in a reduction in mule deer population.	The overall impact of wilderness designation would be a beneficial effect on mule deer population. Mechanical thinning on 2,000 acres of mule deer habitat would be foregone.	The overall impact of wilderness designation of 46,300 acres would be beneficial to mule deer population. Nondesignation of 14,760 acres would result in a reduction in mule deer population in those areas.	There would be no impact to mule deer populations overall.

COMPARATIVE SUMMARY TABLE OF IMPACTS
ALTERNATIVES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE	PROPOSED ACTION (Partial Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE A (All Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE B (Partial Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE C (No Wilderness)
		FANDANGO		
Impact on Wilderness Values	On the 31,740 acres designated wilderness, all wilderness values would be maintained. The area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude would reduce slightly because of approximately 500 visits of recreational ORV use. On the 9,200 acres not designated wilderness, there would be a slight reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitude because of continued recreational ORV use.	There would be a slight improvement of the area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude. There would be a slight decrease in the area's opportunities for solitude on 1,900 acres in Cow Canyon.	On the 46,300 acres designated wilderness, all wilderness values would be maintained. The area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude would improve slightly. The Bristlecone pine, bighorn sheep habitat, South Sixmile Canyon and the proposed National Natural Landmark areas would be protected. On the 14,760 acres not designated wilderness, there would be a slight reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitude because of increasing recreational ORV use.	On 40,940 acres of the WSA, there would be a slight reduction of the area's naturalness and opportunities for solitude. In the Cow Canyon area of the WSA, there would be a moderate reduction of the area's naturalness and opportunities for solitude.

COMPARATIVE SUMMARY TABLE OF IMPACTS
ALTERNATIVES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE	PROPOSED ACTION (Partial Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE A (All Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE B (Partial Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE C (No Wilderness)
		FANDANGO (continued)		
Impact on Recreational ORV Use	Recreational ORV use would continue on the 11 miles of cherrystem roads and 10 miles of ways that would remain open on the 31,740 acres designated wilderness and 500 visits would be expected annually. On the 9,200 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness, recreational ORV use would continue to increase, but would not exceed 200 visits annually for the foreseeable future.	Recreational ORV use would be foregone on the 40,940 acres designated wilderness and 700 visits would be foregone annually.	Recreational ORV use would be foregone on the 46,300 acres designated wilderness and 500 visits would be foregone annually. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible. On the 14,760 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness, recreational ORV use would continue to increase, but would not exceed 1,000 visits annually for the foreseeable future.	There would be no impact on recreational ORV use.
Impacts on Development of Mineral Resources	No impact to minerals exploration or development would occur.	No impact to mineral exploration or development would occur.	Development of one small precious metals mine would be foregone.	There would be no impact on development of mineral resources.

COMPARATIVE SUMMARY TABLE OF IMPACTS
ALTERNATIVES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE	PROPOSED ACTION (Partial Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE A (All Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE B (Partial Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE C (No Wilderness)
		FANDANGO (continued)		
Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction	There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and construction.	There would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance or construction.	There would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance and construction.	There would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance and construction.
Impact on Mule Deer Population	The overall impact of wilderness designation of 31,740 acres would be beneficial to mule deer populations. Nondesignation of 9,200 acres would result in a reduction in mule deer population.	The overall impact of wilderness designation would be beneficial to mule deer population.	The overall impact of wilderness designation of 46,300 acres would be beneficial to mule deer population. Nondesignation of 14,760 acres would result in a reduction in mule deer population.	There would be a reduction in mule deer population.

COMPARATIVE SUMMARY TABLE OF IMPACTS
ALTERNATIVES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE	PROPOSED ACTION (Partial Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE A (All Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE B (Partial Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE C (No Wilderness)
		PALISADE MESA		
Input on Wilderness Values	On the 66,110 acres designated wilderness, the area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude would slightly reduce. The areas most spectacular scenery, naturalness, and opportunities for primitive recreation would be retained. On the 33,440 acres not designated wilderness, there would be a slight reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitide.	On 99,550 acres of the WSA, there would be a slight improvement of the area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude.	On the 113,870 acres designated wilderness, all wilderness values would be maintained. The area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude would improve slightly. On the 23,680 acres not designated wilderness, there would be a slight reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitude.	There would be no impact to the wilderness values of size, naturalness, and outstanding opportunities for solitude.
Impact on Recreational ORV Use	No impact to recreational ORV use would occur on the 66,110 acres recommended suitable.	Recreational ORV use of 500 visits would be foregone on the 99,550 acres designated wilderness.	Recreational ORV use would be foregone on the 113,870 acres designated wilderness and 760 visits would be foregone annually. On the 23,680 acre of the WSA not designated wilderness, recreational ORV use would continue to increase, but would not exceed 500 visits annually for the foreseeable future.	There would be no impact on recreational ORV use.

COMPARATIVE SUMMARY TABLE OF IMPACTS
ALTERNATIVES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE	PROPOSED ACTION (Partial Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE A (All Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE B (Partial Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE C (No Wilderness)
		PALISADE MESA (continued)		
Impact on Development of Mineral Resources	No impact to mineral exploration or development would occur.	No impact to exploration or development of mineral resources would occur.	No impact to exploration or development of mineral resources would occur.	No impact to mineral exploration or development would occur.
Impact on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction	There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and construction.	There would be no impacts on grazing facility maintenance or construction.	There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and construction.	There would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance.

COMPARATIVE SUMMARY TABLE OF IMPACTS
ALTERNATIVES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE	PROPOSED ACTION (Partial Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE A (All Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE B (Partial Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE C (No Wilderness)
		THE WALL		
Impact on Wilderness Values	The area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude would reduce slightly. On the 7,680 acres not designated wilderness, there would be a slight reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitide.	On 38,000 acres of the WSA, there would be a slight improvement of the area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude.	The area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude would improve slightly. On the 23,680 acres not designated wilderness, there would be a slight reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitude.	There would be no impact to The Wall WSA's wilderness values of size, naturalness, and outstanding opportunities for solitude.
Impacts on Recreational ORV Use	No impact to recreational ORV use would occur. On the 7,680 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness, recreational ORV use would continue to increase, but would not exceed 300 visits annually for the foreseeable future.	Recreational ORV use would be foregone on the 38,000 acres designated wilderness and 250 visits would be foregone annually.	Recreational ORV use would be foregone on the 113,870 acres designated wilderness and 1,000 visits would be foregone annually. On the 23,680 acre of the WSA not designated wilderness, recreational ORV use would continue to increase, but would not exceed 500 visits annually for the foreseeable future.	There would be no impact on recreational ORV use.

COMPARATIVE SUMMARY TABLE OF IMPACTS
ALTERNATIVES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE	PROPOSED ACTION (Partial Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE A (All Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE B (Partial Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE C (No Wilderness)
		THE WALL (continued)		
Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction	There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and construction.	There would be no impacts on grazing facility maintenance or construction.	There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and construction.	There would be no impact on grazing facility mainten-ance or construction in The Wall WSA.

COMPARATIVE SUMMARY TABLE OF IMPACTS
ALTERNATIVES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE	PROPOSED ACTION (Partial Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE A (All Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE B (Partial Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE C (No Wilderness)
		SOUTH REVEILLE		
Impact On Wilderness Values	On the 33,000 acres designated wilderness, the area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude would reduce slightly. On the 73,200 acres not designated wilderness, there would be a slight reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitide.	On 106,200 acres of the WSA, there would be a slight improvement of the area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude. There would be a slight decrease in the area's naturalness and opportunities for solitude in the Fang Ridge area of the WSA.	The area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude would improve slightly. On the 960 acres not designated wilderness, there would be a reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitide.	The South Reveille WSA's wilderness values of size, naturalness, and outstanding opportunities for solitude would be lost.
Impact on Recreational ORV Use	No impact to recreational ORV use would occur. On the 73,200 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness, recreational ORV use would continue to increase, but would not exceed 1,000 visits annually for the foreseeable future.	Recreational ORV use would be foregone on the 106,200 acres designated wilderness and 2,700 visits would be foregone annually.	Same as proposed.	There would be no impact on recreational ORV use.
Impact on Development of Mineral Resources	No impact to mineral exploration or development would occur.	Development of a small producing oil field would be foregone.	Same as proposed.	There would be no impact on development of mineral resources in the South Reveille WSA.

COMPARATIVE SUMMARY TABLE OF IMPACTS
ALTERNATIVES

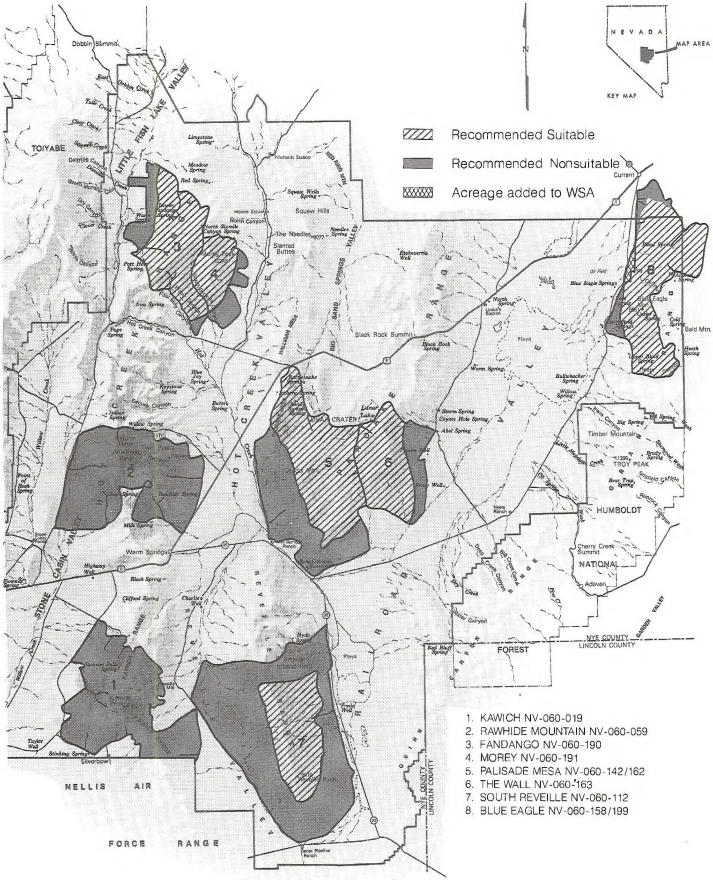
ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE	PROPOSED ACTION (Partial Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE A (All Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE B (Partial Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE C (No Wilderness)
		SOUTH REVEILLE (continued)		
Impact on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction	There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and construction.	One well would not be developed.	Same as proposed.	There would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance or construction in the South Reveille WSA.
Impact on High Erosion Potential Watersheds	Rainfall on poorly placed roads, cleared areas, and disturbed soil as a result of mineral exploration and development could cause soil erosion on watersheds in the area not designated wilderness.	It is anticipated one precious metals mine will be developed on this watershed and about ten acres of disturbance would occur.	Same as proposed.	Rainfall on poorly placed roads, cleared areas, and disturbed soil as a result of mineral exploration and development could cause increased soil erosion on these watersheds.

COMPARATIVE SUMMARY TABLE OF IMPACTS
ALTERNATIVES

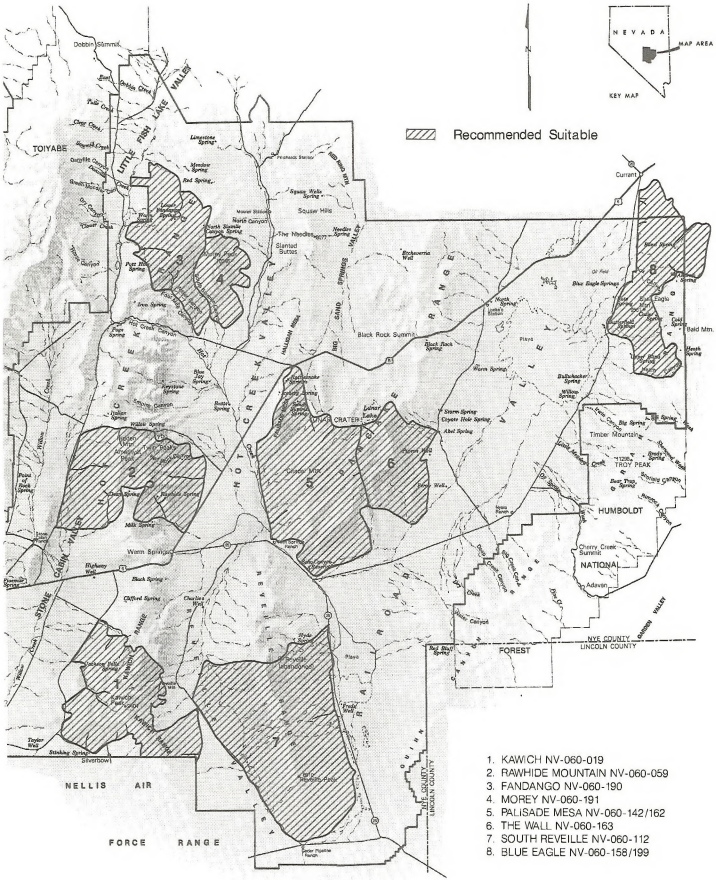
ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE	PROPOSED ACTION (Partial Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE A (All Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE B (Partial Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE C (No Wilderness)
		BLUE EAGLE		
Impact on Wilderness Values	On the 51,350 acres designated wilderness, the area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude would reduce slightly. On the 8,960 acres not designated wilderness, there would be a reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitide.	On 59,560 acres of the WSA, there would be a slight improvement of the area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude. There would be a slight decrease in the area's naturalness opportunities in the northeastern area of the WSA.	The area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude would improve slightly. On the 960 acres not designated wilderness, there would be a reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitide.	The Blue Eagle WSA's wilderness values of size, naturalness, and outstanding opportunities for solitude would be lost.
Impact of Recreation ORV Use	No impact to recreational ORV use in the designated wilderness. On the 8,960 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness, recreational ORV use would continue to increase, but would not exceed 100 visits annually for the foreseeable future.	Recreational ORV use would be foregone on the 59,560 acres designated wilderness and 670 visits would be foregone annually.	Recreational ORV use would be foregone on the 59,350 acres designated wilderness and 500 visits would be foregone annually. On the 960 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness, recreational ORV use would continue to increase, but would not exceed 100 visits annually for the foreseeable future.	There would be no impact on recreational ORV use.

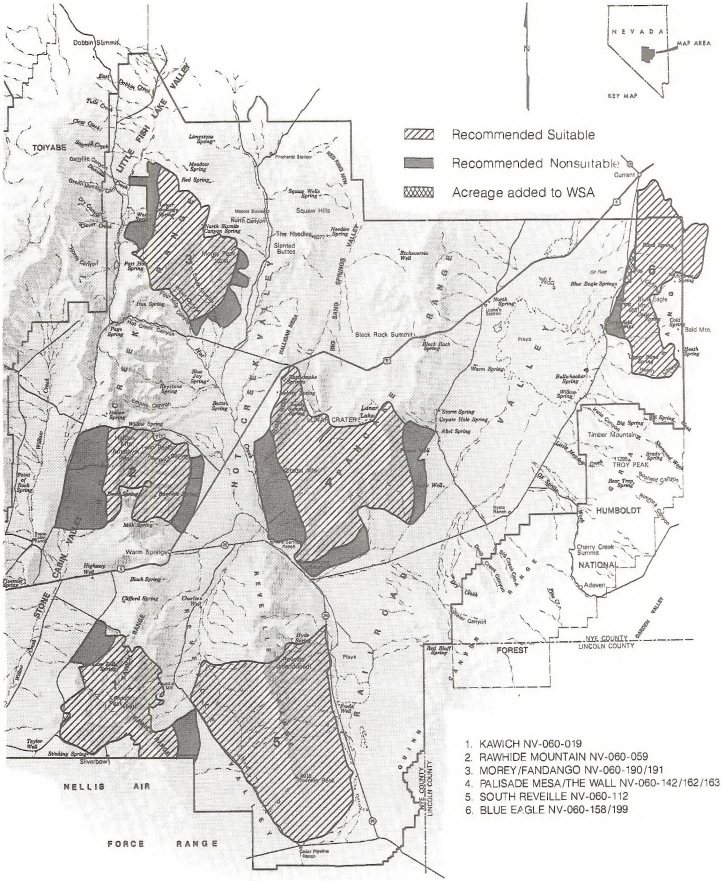
COMPARATIVE SUMMARY TABLE OF IMPACTS
ALTERNATIVES

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE	PROPOSED ACTION (Partial Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE A (All Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE B (Partial Wilderness)	ALTERNATIVE C (No Wilderness)
		BLUE EAGLE (continued)		
Impact on Development of Mineral Resources	No impact to minerals development would occur.	Oil and gas exploration on a small producing oil field would be foregone.	No impacts to development of mineral resources would occur.	There would be no impact on development of mineral resources in the Blue Eagle WSA.
Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction	There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and construction.	There would be no impacts on grazing facility maintenance or construction.	There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and construction.	There would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance or construction in the Blue Eagle WSA.

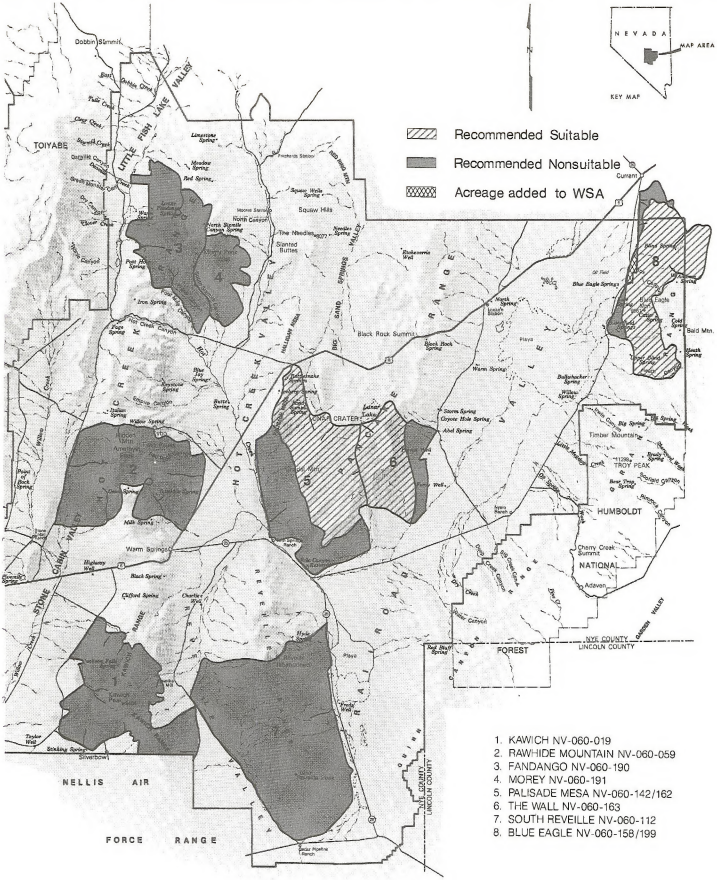


PROPOSED ACTION


NEVADA
MAP AREA
KEY MAP
N
Recommended Suitable
Debbie Summit
TOIYABE
LITTLE FISH LAKE VALLEY
Currant
Sawtooth Ridge
Sawtooth Peak
Sawtooth Spring
Sawtooth Canyon
Sawtooth Valley
Sawtooth Wash
Sawtooth Pass



ALTERNATIVE B
EMPHASIS ON MANAGEABILITY



ALTERNATIVE C
EMPHASIS ON RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

CHAPTER THREE

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

KAWICH WSA NV-060-019

General Characteristics

This WSA of 54,320 acres lies in the Kawich Range of northeastern Nye County and extends into portions of both Stone Cabin and Reveille Valleys. It has an irregular shape, measuring approximately 12 miles north to south and from eight to 12 miles east to west (Wilderness Study Areas Map).

The study area is mountainous with a high central plateau and several peaks. The highest peak, Kawich Peak, is at 9,404 foot elevation. The Reveille Valley, the lowest area, is at 6,040 foot elevation. The WSA contains two lakes about one-half acre is size. The Bellehelen Lakes are located on the plateau at the norhtern end of the WSA. There are 560 acres of private inholdings within the WSA.

Vegetation within the unit consists primarily of dense pinyon pine/juniper woodland with a northern desert shrub understory. Mountain mahogany can be found above the 8,000 foot elevation.

Wilderness Values

Naturalness: Within the boundaries of the Kawich WSA there are approximately 25 miles of vehicle ways, three miles of pipeline used for transmitting water outside the WSA, two spring developments, and approximately four miles of fence. The vehicle ways are found primarily in the valley areas. The pipelines are located on the northern and western edges of the WSA. Spring developments and water troughs are located in the southeast corner and are adjacent to the western boundary of the WSA. The fence is located in Haws Canyon on the western side of the WSA (Domestic Livestock and Watershed Map). The total acreage involved is approximately 20 acres.

Natural screening within the WSA, both vegetative and topographic, is sufficient to offset any potential adverse impacts associated with sights and sounds ocurring outside the boundaries of the WSA.

While these imprints are within the WSA, the area generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable.

Opportunities for Solitude: The majority of the WSA is mountainous with sharp elevation changes. Topography is rugged and access is often restricted due to excessive slope. A wide flat plateau in the center of the WSA contains two small lakes. Deep, rocky canyons which penetrate the mountains often continue for miles and provide topographic variation. Rock outcroppings occur throughout the WSA. A flat portion of Reveille Valley lies along the eastern boundary; relief here is limited to shallow gullies.

Vegetation throughout the WSA consists of a dense pinyon pine and juniper canopy. This thick vegetative cover compliments the relief to serve as an excellent screening mechanism. Due to varied topography and dense vegetation, secluded spots are plentiful. Rock outscoppings offer shelter and seclusion as well.

Opportunities for Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are provided for the following activities: hiking, backpacking, hunting, horseback riding, mountain or rock climbing, photography, bird watching and sightseeing.

The steep, rugged terrain of the WSA would prove a challenge to the hiker and backpacker. No formal trails exist in the WSA, but heavily used game trails and some drainages offer access to the interior mountains. The WSA is large enough to accomodate extended backpacking trips. Water is available at Bellehelen Lakes and at several other locations.

Huntable species include mule deer, mountain lion, pronghorn antelope, and chukar partridge. Ease of hunter movement is poor due to rugged terrain and lack of access. No fishable waters exist in the WSA. Viewing opportunities for a wide variety of birds, including raptors, are excellent. The presence of water in the WSA leads to some vegetative diversity, thereby enhancing scenic values.

Special Features: Rugged mountain scenery, colorful rock outcroppings, and broad vistas of the Basin and Range Province are available. All mountain ranges in central Nevada, including the Kawich Range, provide important habitat for mountain lions as well as golden eagles, prarie falcons, and various other raptors.

There are two one-half acre lakes, the Bellehelen Lakes, located on top of the plateau at the northern end of the WSA.

Livestock

There are portions of two livestock allotments located within the Kawich WSA, Stone Cabin Allotment and Reveille Allotment. Three permittees share yearlong authorized use. Current use is estimated at about 1,900 AUMs within the WSA. One permittee currently uses off-road motor vehicles to gather livestock in the valley and bajada portions of the WSA. There are 17 private water rights attached to base property waters scattered within the study area, two developed springs and three miles of pipeline located in the southeast corner of the WSA (Domestic Livestock and Watershed Map).

Recreation

Traditional forms of recreation such as sightseeing, driving for pleasure on roads and ways, camping, hunting, hiking, and rock and mountain climbing occur within the Kawich WSA. Virtually all recreation use occurs on weekends and holidays and involves vehicle use. The majority of motor vehicle use occurs on existing ways and roads.

Minerals

The Kawich WSA is literally surrounded by mining districts with Bellehelen on the north, Eden on the east, Silverbow on the south, and Golden Arrow in the west (Cornwall, 1972 and Schilling, 1976). All of these areas were primarily producers of gold and silver. The ore deposits occurred in quartz veins which may be genetically and spatially related to the inferred resurged caldron area of the northern Kawich Range.

The potential for base, ferrous, and precious metals is good within the study area (Furgo National Inc., 1981). There is low potential for nonmetallic and industrial minerals (Mineral Potential Map). Currently there are 86 pre-FLPMA claims within the WSA and 307 post-FLPMA claims (Table 3-1).

The Reveille Valley portion has good potential for oil and gas, as well as geothermal resources, with 11 post-FLPMA leases occurring within the WSA itself (Mining Claims and Mineral Leases Map).

Watershed

There is a total of 54,320 acres of watershed area within the WSA, including 3,100 acres of a high erosion potential area (Domestic Livestock and Watershed Map). The watersheds that have developed are currently in generally stable condition with good water quality and stable soils, except in areas where surface disturbance has altered the natural run-off pattern. Generally speaking, the majority of the WSA falls into the eight to 12 inch precipitation zone. Precipitation is usually received in the form of snow in winter, late spring storms, or summer thundershowers.

Wildlife Habitat

The Kawich Range supports winter and summer populations of mule deer. The Kawich WSA contains limited mule deer winter range. The heaviest mule deer winter use is in the southwest corner of the WSA, just north of Stinking Springs and Silverbow (Wildlife-Big Game Habitats Map). These areas are a mix of pinyon pine/juniper woodlands and bitterbrush. The majority of the Kawich mule deer move north during winter to Morey Bench, particularly during severe winters (Jim Lusk, NDOW, personal communication, 1981).

The Kawich WSA contains critical mule deer summer range. Summering mule deer can be found in the drainages of Jackson Falls, Cottonwood, Eden Creek, Haws and Breen's Canyons. Summer range vegetation communities vary from the canyon bottoms which contain willow, cottonwood, and meadows, to the mountain tops which contain a variety of mountain brush, grasses and forbs.

Pronghorn antelope use areas are found west of Stinking Springs, west of Bellehellen, and in the southeastern corner of the WSA.

There are no fishable streams in the Kawich WSA, but there are several significant riparian communities located in Jackson Falls Canyon, Haws Canyon, Breen's Ranch, Eden Creek and Cottonwood Canyons.

RAWHIDE MOUNTAIN WSA NV-060-059

General Characteristics

The Rawhide Mountain WSA contains 64,360 acres which lie within the Hot Creek Range. The study area includes portions of Stone Cabin and Hot Creek Valleys. The area is roughly rectangular in shape, approximately seven to 11 miles long north to south and 13 miles wide east to west (Wilderness Study Areas Map).

Rawhide Mountain WSA has a central mountainous core with several canyons penetrating into the interior. Elevations range form 5,360 feet in Hot Creek Valley to 9,145 Feet at the top of Rawhide Mountain.

Vegetative cover is typical of the Great Basin area with pinyon pine/juniper in the upper elevations and a northern desert shrub understory in the lower elevations.

Wilderness Values

Naturalness: Within the boundaries of the Rawhide Mountain WSA there are approximately 17 miles of vehicle ways and one spring development. The vehicle ways are found primarily in the valley areas. The spring development and water trough are located in the southeastern corner of the WSA (Domestic Livestock And Watershed Map). The total acreage involved is approximately 15 acres.

Natural screening within the WSA, both vegetative and topographic, is sufficient to offset any potential sights and sounds occurring outside the boundary of the WSA. The area generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable.

Opportunities for Solitude: Topography varies within the WSA from rugged mountains through rolling foothills, to flat valley floors. Each of these topographic types presents different aspects which influence solitude.

Topography is rugged throughout the interior mountains where deep, wooded canyons are interspersed with high peaks. Some slopes are steep enough to be almost inaccessible. A few wide basins provide a gentler terrain. Vegetation in this area consists of generally heavy pinyon pine and juniper cover with a low sagebrush understory.

Topographical variation in the eastern foothill region is limited to rather wide, shallow drainages. The low hills provide an excellent view into many of these drainages, a view unobstructed by high vegetation. The low growing sagebrush complex is sparse, and elevational changes are gradual.

Relief along the flats on the western and eastern borders of the WSA is limited to shallow gullies and an occassional low basin. The vegetative community is low growing, creating open vistas where a recreationist may be seen for miles. However, the western flats are large enough to provide solitude by size alone, as they measure up to four miles in width. A user would have no trouble locating an area where they feel completely isolated and could avoid the sights and sounds of others.

Opportunities for Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: Due to the lack of diversity and low quality of the recreation opportunities, there are no outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation in this WSA.

Special Features: Rugged mountain scenery, colorful rock outcroppings, and broad vistas of the Basin and Range Province are available in the Rawhide WSA. All mountain ranges in Nevada, including the Hot Creek Range, provide important habitat for mountain lions as well as golden eagles, prarie falcons, and various other raptors.

Charcoal kilns are found within this WSA. The kilns were built in the 1870s to provide charcoal for smeltering furnaces near mining districts. The kilns, built entirely of red brick, are oval in shape with a diameter of 25 feet at the base and a height of approximately 30 feet. The Tybo Kilns, located within the Rawhide Mountain WSA, are on the National Register of Historic Places.

Livestock

There are portions of three grazing allotments covering the Rawhide Mountain WSA. All of the permittees are authorized for yearlong grazing use. Use is split between five permittees using approximately 1,300 AUMs within the WSA. One permittee currently uses off-road motor vehicles to gather livestock in the valley areas of the WSA. There is one existing fence running into the WSA from the west, and one spring development in the southeastern corner (Domestic Livestock and Watershed Map).

Recreation

The traditional types of recreation use have long been popular in the Rawhide Mountain WSA. Activities such as sightseeing, driving for pleasure, camping, hunting, fishing, hiking, rock climbing and backpacking comprise the majority of the recreation use. Virtually all forms of recreation in the area require the use of a motor vehicle either for access or for recreation itself. Off-road vehicle use is currently light, with most use occurring on existing roads and ways.

Minerals

Nearly one-half of the study area is covered by alluvium in Hot Creek Valley and Stone Cabin Valley. Most of the mountainous portion of the WSA is made up of a sequence of volcanic rocks with two areas containing exposed sedimentary rocks. Much high angle faulting, as well as folds and thrust faults present in the sedimentary rock, give the WSA a high degree of structural complexity.

The mountainous portion of the WSA lies within the Tybo Mining District, one of the major districts in northern Nye County. Potential for base, ferrous and precious metals within the study area is mostly speculative. A small area of high potential exists along the northern boundary of the WSA, adjacent to the Tybo Mining District (Mineral Potential Map). There are 204 pre-FLPMA claims and 709 post-FLPMA claims within the area (Table 3-1).

There is good potential for oil and gas resources in the valley areas of Hot Creek and eastern Stone Cabin Valleys. Geothermal resource potential is also good in Hot Creek Valley and in the western portion of Stone Cabin Valley. A total of 14 post-FLPMA leases have been issued in the area of 13,280 acres (Mining Claims and Mineral Leases Map).

Watershed

The 64,360 acre watershed which has developed in the Rawhide WSA is generally stable, except for the areas where surface disturbance has altered the natural run-off pattern. There is a 9,700 acre area of high erosion potential in the WSA (Domestic Livestock and Watershed Map). Measurable precipitation (eight to 12 inches) is received during winter storms and late spring storms in the form of snow, or in heavy summer thundershowers.

Wildlife Habitat

The Rawhide Mountain WSA supports a small wintering population of mule deer. They use pockets of cliffrose and mahogany located between Rawhide Mountain and Twin Peaks (Wildlife-Big Game Habitats Map).

Pronghorn antelope occasionally use the Stone Cabin Valley portion of the WSA. Riparian communities are limited in this WSA. They are found near springs and seeps.

FANDANGO WSA NV-060-190

General Characteristics

The Fandango WSA encompasses 40,940 acres in the Hot Creek Range and a small portion of Little Fish Lake Valley. It is irregular in shape, measuring approximately 18 miles north to south and from three to eight miles east to west (Wilderness Areas Map). The area is mountainous with broad drainages extending into the interior. Elevation ranges from 5,760 feet in Little Fish Lake Valley to 9,825 feet on top of Mahogany Peak.

Vegetation consists of pinyon pine/juniper, aspen and mountain mahogany with a sagebrush understory. There is some diversity in riparian areas found along South Sixmile Creek at the eastern border of the WSA.

Wilderness Values

Naturalness: There are approximately 15 miles of ways, five miles of pipeline used for transmitting water out of the WSA, and five spring developments within the Fandango WSA. There is also a fenceline about two miles long. The vehicle ways are found mostly in the canyons adjacent to existing roads. The pipelines are located in the northern and western parts of the WSA. The spring developments and water troughs are located in the northern corner and adjacent to the western boundary of the WSA. The fence is located in Big Cow Canyon, within the center of the WSA (Domestic Livestock and Watershed Map). There are a total of 20 acres involved in these developments.

Natural screening within the WSA, both vegetative and topographic, is sufficient to offset any sights and sounds which may be occurring outside the boundaries of the WSA.

Opportunities for Solitude: Topography is varied and rugged throughout much of the WSA. High mountains are cut by deep canyons which are generally several miles long. A wide strip of flat valley land lies along the western boundary where topographical variety is limited to rolling hills and shallow gullies.

Vegetation consists of pinyon pine and juniper interspersed with mountain mahogany and scattered aspen stands. Vegetation in the flat western portion is confined almost entirely to sagebrush, creating open vistas where a person may be observed from a great distance.

Topographical variation provides plentiful secluded spots within the WSA, and rock outcroppings provide small shelters where isolation can be achieved.

Opportunities for Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are provided for hiking, backpacking, hunting, fishing, horseback riding, mountain or rock climbing, photography and bird watching.

The WSA is of ample size to accomodate an extended backpacking trip. Although no formal trails exist, a number of game and cattle trails could be used by the hiker. Objectives include Big and Little Fandango Peaks, Mahogany Peak, and any of a number of lesser peaks and wooded drainages.

Huntable species within the WSA include mule deer, mountain lion, chukar partridge and sage grouse. A self-propograting population of eastern brook trout exists in the South Sixmile Creek. Fish average five to six inches in length, although sizes up to ten inches have been reported.

Opportunities for viewing raptors and other nongame birds are quite good in Sixmile Canyon. Vegetative diversity is a prime factor behind scenic values in this WSA. Eye catching forms exist, primarily rock outcroppings and steep peaks. The flora in South Sixmile Canyon is varied and interesting. Forbs are abundant, and the large number of flowering species creates an excellent opportunity for spring wildflower observation.

Two sets of charcoal kilns lie within the WSA. One set lies along the South Sixmile Canyon Road, and the other set lies in Wood Tick Canyon. Both sets of kilns are excellent subjects for sightseeing and photography.

Special Features: Rugged mountain scenery, colorful rock outcroppings, and broad vistas of the Basin and Range Province are available.

All mountain ranges in central Nevada, including the Hot Creek Range, provide important habitat for mountain lions as well as golden eagles, prarie falcons, and various other raptors.

Charcoal kilns are found within the WSA. The kilns were built in the 1870s to provide charcoal for smeltering furnaces near mining districts. The kilns, built entirely of red brick, are oval in shape with a diameter of 25 feet at the base and a height of approximately 30 feet.

Livestock

There are three allotments partially contained in the Fandango WSA, each with one permittee having summer use (05/15 - 09/15, and 05/16 - 11/15). Current use is estimated at about 2,100 AUMs within the WSA. There are five spring developments, five miles of pipeline, and two miles of fence located in the western and northeastern parts of the WSA (Domestic Livestock and Watershed Map).

Recreation

Recreational activities within the Fandango WSA include the traditional hiking, backpacking, driving for pleasure, trapping, rock and mountain climbing, plant and mineral collection, photography and bird watching. Virtually all recreation use in the unit occurs on weekends and holidays, usually associated with motor vehicle use.

Minerals

Structurally, the study area is complex. The entire mountain area is broken by numerous high angle faults and thrust faults in the sedimentary units. The northwest portion of the WSA which lies in Little Fish Lake Valley and the far southern end of Hot Creek Valley are covered by alluvium. Roughly, the northern one-quarter of the mountainous area has sedimentary rocks exposed, while the southern three-quarters is comprised of volcanics.

The Morey Mining District, located at the eastern edge of the WSA, was a leading area for silver production. The district had a total production of almost $500,000 for silver with minor vales from gold and lead. Furgo National, Inc. (1981) also reports a recent discovery in the Morey Mining District of a prophyrhy molybdenum deposit with tin as a by-product.

Most mineral potential within the study area is low (Mineral Potential Map). There are 14 pre-FLPMA claims and 26 post-FLPMA claims within the WSA for minerals (Mining Claims and Mineral Leases Map). Potential for oil and gas is good in the Hot Creek Valley and Little Fish Lake Valley areas. Geothermal potential is good in the Hot Creek Valley portion, with low potential in the remainder of the area (Mineral Potential Map). There are 14 post-FLPMA leases for oil and gas currently within the WSA for a total of 7,680 acres (Table 3 - 1).

Watershed

There is a total of 31,740 acres of watershed which is currently in stable condition within the WSA. There are no high potential erosion areas within the acreage identified. Most of this area falls into the eight to 12 inch precipitation zone, with several areas receiving as much as 16 inches. Others receive only six inches per year. The majority of precipitation received is from winter snow, late spring storms or summer thundershowers.

Wildlife Habitat

The Fandango WSA provides important mule deer summer range (Wildlife-Big Game Habitats Map). Pinyon pine and juniper encroachment on some mule deer winter ranges is resulting in decreased browse availability. It may be necessary in these areas to mechanically manipulate vegetation to re-establish browse. The WSA is dotted with riparian and mountain brush communities, all of which provide good mule deer summer range. Significant riparian communities are found in Big and Little Cow Canyons, near Sweet Spring, and at other springs and seeps within the area.

Pronghorn antelope occupy Little Fish Lake Valley in the western portion of the WSA. They utilize the sagebrush slopes and crested wheatgrass seedings located adjacent to the WSA

The bighorn sheep which were reintroduced into the Morey WSA wander into this area occasionally. They normally stay at the higher elevations and in rougher terrain.

South Sixmile Creek contains a naturally reproducing population of brook trout.

MOREY WSA NV-060-191

General Characteristics

The Morey WSA lies in the Hot Creek Range adjacent to the southeastern portion of the Fandango WSA and includes a small portion of Hot Creek Valley (Wilderness Areas Map). The study area is oblong shaped measuring 12 miles north to south and six miles east to west.

The WSA is extremely rugged with rocky, narrow, steep walled canyons penetrating from both the east and west sides. Elevations range from 5,780 feet in Hot Creek Valley to 10,246 feet on Morey Peak.

Pinyon pine/juniper, mountain mahogany, aspen and limber pine cover the higher elevations. There are small stands of bristlecone pines near Morey Peak. Riparian vegetation adds diversity along South Sixmile Creek on the western border of the WSA.

Wilderness Values

Naturalness: Within the boundaries of the Morey WSA are approximately two miles of vehicle ways and two miles of pipeline used to transmit water outside the WSA. The vehicle ways are found primarily in the canyons adjacent to existing roads. The pipeline is located along the eastern boundary of the WSA (Domestic Livestock and Watershed Map). Total acreage involved is approximately five acres.

Natural screening within the WSA, both vegetative and topographic, is sufficient to offset any potential adverse impacts associated with sights and sounds occurring outside the boundaries of the WSA.

Opportunities for Solitude: The WSA consists almost entirely of Morey Mountain and its surrounding lesser peaks. Topography is extremely rugged and rocky on the east side of the mountain. The west side, although still very steep, is less rocky and more accessible. Deep canyons penetrate the mountains for several miles, finally becoming too steep to climb. A flat portion of Hot Creek Valley on the southern end of the WSA contains no topographical variation. Elevational changes within the interior are sharp and often extreme.

Vegetation varies throughout the area with pinyon pine/juniper, mountain mahogany and aspen all occurring in significant densities. Tree/shrub cover is fairly heavy in much of the WSA and compliments the relief to provide effective screening. Where vegetation is sparse, topography generally is rugged enough to serve as an isolating mechanism.

Due to the rugged terrain and presence of screening vegetation, secluded spots are numerous. Additionally, rock outcroppings provide sheltered recesses large enough for one or more persons. A user would have little difficulty in finding a spot where they could feel completely isolated, or where they could easily screen themselves from the sights and sound of others.

Opportunities for Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: The opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are provided by hiking, backpacking, fishing, hunting, horseback riding, mountain or rock climbing, photography, and bird watching. Sightseeing for botanical, zoological and geologic features is also good in this area.

Hiking objectives include Morey Peak, any of several attendant peaks, and many scenic wooded canyons. Many beautiful areas are accessible in a few hours. Game trails and drainages provide access to the interior of the WSA from the west. The east side of the mountain is very steep and offers no easy access to the mountain; however, the rugged and varied topography would challenge a backpacker. The WSA is of sufficient size to accomodate an extended trip. Water is available from South Sixmile Creek, as well as from a number of small springs. Huntable species include mule deer, mountain lion and chukar partridge. Ease of hunter movement is fair due to the rugged terrain. A self-propogating population of eastern brook trout exists in the South Sixmile Creek. Fish in the creek average five to six inches in length, although individuals of ten inches have been reported.

The perennial nature of South Sixmile Creek leads to diverse flora in South Sixmile Canyon. This is turn encourages a varied wildlife population of which raptors and other birds are the most visible.

Vegetative variety enhances the area's scenic qualities. Rock outcroppings and sculptured landforms create topographical diversity. The presence of water in streams, waterfalls, and many springs makes this area unusual in the region.

The large number of flowering species in South Sixmile Canyon offers an excellent opportunity for spring wildflower observation. Additionally, bristlecone pines are found in several locations on Morey Peak. This is one of only two known occurrences of these trees on volcanic soils.

Two sets of charcoal kilns lie within the WSA along South Sixmile Canyon Road. Four of the six kilns are in excellent condition, providing good opportunities for sightseeing and photography.

Special Features: Rugged mountain scenery, coloful rock outcroppings, and broad vistas of the Basin and Range Province are available. All mountain ranges in central Nevada, including the Hot Creek Range, provide important habitat for mountain lions as well as golden eagles, prarie falcons, and various other types of raptors. Additionally, bighorn sheep have recently been reintroduced into the Morey WSA by the Nevada Department of Wildlife and the Bureau.

Bristlecone pine trees are found within the Morey WSA. Bristlecone pines are of special interest because they are the oldest living things known and are found in only a few high elevation areas in the United States.

A Native American cultural resource site consisting of a rock wall alignment and hunting blind, is located in the Morey WSA. Historic charcoal kilns are also found within the Morey WSA. The kilns were built in the 1870s to provide charcoal for smeltering furnaces near mining districts. The kilns, built entirely of red brick, are oval in shape with a diameter of 25 feet at the base and a height of approximately 30 feet.

Livestock

There are two allotments partially within the Morey WSA. The permittee is authorized summer use (05/16 - 09/15) amounting to about 930 AUMs within the WSA. There are no existing range improvements within this allotment.

Recreation

The Morey WSA provides excellent fishing, hiking, backpacking, and rock climbing types of recreation. The majority of this recreation use occurs on weekends and holidays. Use is generally dispersed throughout the unit. Virtually all recreation use involves the use of motor vehicles.

Minerals

Most of the WSA is volcanic in nature, with small intrusive bodies present along the western side. Alluvium is found in Hot Creek Valley, and a small area of sedimentary rocks is located in the northwestern corner of the WSA. Structurally, the area is moderately complex with a few major faults and some minor faulting along the west side. The Morey Mining District is located near the northern boundary of the WSA (Minerals Potential Map). This district had a total of $500,000 of production for silver, with minor gold and lead production.

Outside of the Morey Mining District potential for metallic, nonmetallic and industrial minerals is speculative or poor. There are a total of 162 pre and post-FLPMA claims within the WSA (Table 3-1).

Oil and gas resource potential is good in the Hot Creek Valley area. This area also has good potential for geothermal resources. A total of eight post-FLPMA leases for oil and gas exist within the area, covering about 3,200 acres (Mining claims and Mineral Leases Map).

Watershed

Erosion is not a major problem in this WSA. Erosion of watersheds is primarily caused by exceptionally large rainstorms. The majority of precipitation is either received as winter snow, late spring storms, or summer thundershowers. The watersheds in this area are generally stable. There are no high erosion potential areas within this WSA

Wildlife Habitat

The Morey WSA supports a very important mule deer winter range (Wildlife-Big Game Habitats Map). Mule deer from central Nevada migrate to Morey Bench during the winter. They occupy the lower portions of the pinyon pine and juniper woodland and the bitterbrush and sagebrush zone. The mule deer use this area from late November to late March, and summer in the higher elevations. They use the uppermost mountain grasslands and mountain brush types.

Bighorn sheep were recently reintroduced into this area. It is expected they will use the steeper and rougher terrain near Morey Peak.

The Morey WSA contains an excellent fishable stream on its western boundary at South Sixmile Creek. This stream contains a naturally reproducing population of eastern brook trout.

There is a great diversity of riparian communities within the Morey WSA including willow, cottonwood, aspen, and meadows. These communities are located in Sixmile, Hobble and South Canyons, as well as near most springs and seeps.

PALISADE MESA WSA NV -060142/162

General Characteristics

The Palisade Mesa WSA lies in the Pancake Range, adjacent to The Wall WSA. Portions of both Hot Creek Valley and Railroad Valley are contained in the WSA. Roughly rectangular in shape, the WSA is approximately 18 miles north to south and nine miles east to west (Wilderness Areas Map).

The study area contains mesas, lava flows, volcanic craters, and cinder cones. The mesa climbs 600 to 2,000 feet above the valley floor. Elevations range from 5,000 feet in Railroad Valley to 7,394 feet on top of Buckskin Point.

Vegetation is mostly northern desert shrub type with some juniper occurring between rock outcroppings on the mesas.

Wilderness Values

Naturalness: Within the boundaries of the Palisade Mesa WSA are approximately 20 miles of vehicle ways, a five surface-acre water impoundment, and five spring developments. The vehicle ways are found primarily in the valley areas. The water impoundment is located in the eastern portion of the WSA. The spring developments and water troughs are located along the northern and eastern boundaries of the WSA (Domestic Livestock and Watershed Map). Total acreage involved is approximately 25 acres.

Natural screening within the WSA, both vegetative and topographic, is sufficient to offset any potential adverse impacts associated with sights and sounds occurring outside the boundaries of the WSA.

Opportunities for Solitude: The majority of the WSA is composed of rocky, sheer-sided mesas. Changes in elevation are abrupt, creating a varied and interesting topography. Canyons into the mesas are deep and rugged. Terrain on top of the mesas is rather flat and rolling with innumerable drainages and gullies throughout. Huge rock formations and boulder fields create recesses large enough to hold one or more people. Flat valley portions along the west and south contain little topographic variation, with relief limited to shallow gullies.

Vegetation is sparse and low growing over most of the WSA. Where it occurs, the juniper complex contributes to the natural screening, but nowhere is it a major factor.

Secluded spots are primarily a product of excellent topographical variation and occur throughout the WSA. Rock formations abound, creating recesses and sheltered spots. A user would have no trouble screening himself from the sights and sounds of others.

Opportunities for Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: The opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are provided for hiking, backpacking, hunting, horseback riding, mountain and rock climbing, photography, bird watching, and sightseeing.

Vertical cliffs along the mesas provide some challenge to a hiker, but once on top the terrain is gentler and mobility is good. Several mesas are close enough to roads to serve as objectives for day hikes. The unit is large enough to accomodate an extended backpacking trip, although lack of free water might be a limiting factor. Objectives include any of a number of scenic mesas and canyons.

Mountain climbing is restricted by an absence of objectives and the generally poor quality of the rock. However, the rock formations, clefts, spires, chimneys and boulder fields all provide opportunities for bouldering and scrambling.

Huntable species include mule deer, pronghorn antelope, mountain lion and chukar. Low populations for all of these species affect hunting success.

Pronghorn antelope occur throughout the valley areas and are highly visible. Raptors occur in good numbers and may be viewed in the air or on hunting perches throughout the WSA.

Landforms are stark and eye catching. Sculptured rock formations, interesting vistas, and rocky canyons all add to the scenic values and provide excellent subjects for photography. The scenery is unusual for this region. Lunar Crater, a maar volcano listed on the National Natural Landmark Register, is located within this WSA. Other features of interest include several cinder cones, Palisade Mesa, Black Beauty Mesa, and Big Fault Ridge.

Basalt, multi-colored obsidian, volcanic cinders and other rocks of volcanic origin may be collected in the WSA.

Special Features: Vivid examples of volcanic processes are present within the Palisade Mesa WSA. Lunar Crater, formed by an explosive release of magmatic gases, is located within the WSA. It has been listed as a National Natural Landmark. The Pancake Range provides important habitat for mountain lions, golden eagles, prarie falcon and various other raptors.

Livestock

There are three allotments partially or wholly contained in the Palisade Mesa WSA. One allotment is authorized for fall and winter use only (12/12/ - 04/10), the others are yearlong use. Use within the WSA is currently estimated at about 3,400 AUMs. There is one private water right existing inside of the WSA, five spring developments and a water improvement scattered along the eastern half of the WSA (Domestic Livestock and Watershed Map). One permittee also uses motor vehicles to gather livestock in the valley and bajada portions of the WSA. Three miles of fence are planned to be installed within the WSA.

Recreation

Recreation use is minimal within the Palisade Mesa WSA. Other than the pursuits of sightseeing, hiking and photography, there is relatively little for the recreationist here. Only small herds of mule deer and pronghorn antelope are found here, and there are no fishable streams in the WSA. The natural landscape and volcanic formations provide the highest recreational values. Virtually all use in the area includes motor vehicles for access or recreational use.

Minerals

This study area consists of a series of extrusive volcanic rocks. There is only minor high angle faulting. The northern boundary of the WSA runs along the southwest edge of the Lunar Lake Caldera. There are no mining districts near the WSA, and only a small amount of prospecting has occurred in the southwestern corner. Mineral potential throughout the study area is speculative to low (Mineral Potential Map).

The Railroad Valley portion of the WSA has good potential for oil and gas resources as evidenced by the 30 leases found in the area (Table 3-1). Geothermal potential, however, is low.

Watershed

The Palisade Mesa WSA has a small area of high erosion potential (Domestic Livestock and Watershed Map). The watershed is generally stable, except for areas where surface disturbance has destroyed the natural run-off patterns. Erosion of watersheds is primarily caused by exceptionally large amounts of rain, usually during summer thundershowers. The majority of precipitation is otherwise received as snow in winter and late spring storms.

Wildlife Habitat

The Palisade Mesa WSA supports a small resident mule deer herd. Little is known about this herd, however, the Nevada Department of Wildlife has indicated that they occupy the mesa tops (wildlife-Big Game Habitats Map).

Pronghorn antelope are found in the northeastern corner of the WSA near Lunar Crater and Chuck Wagon Flat. They use the shadscale, winterfat, ricegrass and forb areas in the vicinity of dependable water.

Riparian areas are limited in this WSA. They are found near the few springs in the area.

THE WALL WSA NV -060-163

General Characteristics

The study area consists of 38,000 acres lying within the Pancake Range adjacent to the Palisade Mesa WSA. A portion of The Wall WSA lies within Railroad Valley. The WSA is generally square, measuring approximately nine miles north to south and seven miles east to west Wilderness Areas Map).

The WSA consists of a series of high mesas rising from 600 to 2,000 feet above the basin floor. Large rock outcroppings are seen on top of the mesas.

Elevations within the WSA range from 4,800 feet in Railroad Valley to 6,783 feet at the top of the highest mesa. Vegetation is generally of the northern desert shrub type community with some interspersed pinyon pine/juniper at the higher elevations.

Wilderness Values

Naturalness: Within the boundaries of The Wall WSA are approximately five miles of vehicle ways, one mile of wire fence, and one water tank and trough. The vehicle ways are found in the Railroad Valley portion of the WSA. The fences are located in the northern and western parts of the WSA and the water tank and trough are located along the western boundary of the WSA Domestic Livestock and Watershed Map). Total acreage involved is approximately five acres.

Natural screening within the WSA, both vegetative and topographic, is sufficient to offset any potential impacts associated with sights and sounds occurring outside the boundaries of the WSA.

Opportunities for Solitude: The northern half of the WSA consists of rocky mesas with deep, winding drainages. Access is difficult from the north, east and west due to steep cliffs. The mesa tops are rather flat but are crossed with numerous gullies and low hills which provide excellent topographic variation. Rock formations and protruding boulders offer shelter and seclusion. The flat valley areas in the south and east are crossed by shallow drainages which provide little screening. Several low hills and steep buttes provide the only topographical relief in this valley portion.

Vegetation is sparse throughout the WSA. However, juniper trees do occur over the mesas and in some areas are numerous enough to offer screening. Where it occurs, tree cover compliments the topography and provides excellent natural screening.

Due to varied topography and the presence of numerous rock formations and trees, secluded spots are common throughout the mountainous portion of this WSA. There are many areas where total isolation may be achieved. A recreationist could easily screen himself from the sights and sounds of others.

Opportunities for Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: The outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are provided by hiking, backpacking, hunting, horseback riding, mountain or rock climbing, photography, bird watching, and sightseeing activities.

Access to the mesas is difficult and challenging due to steep slopes, but otherwise terrain is conducive to hiking and backpacking. Drainages are deep but often serve as excellent access routes to various parts of the WSA. The WSA is large enough to support an extended trip, although a lack of free water would be a limiting factor. Objectives for such a trip include any of several scenic mesas and canyons.

Mountain climbing is restricted by the lack of objectives and generally poor quality of the rock. However, the great number of boulders, rock formations, chimneys, and clefts provide opportunities for bouldering and scrambling.

Huntable species include mule deer, pronghorn antelope, mountain lion, and chukar partride. None of these species occur in great numbers, which would adversely affect hunting success.

Raptors occur throughout the WSA and may be seen at all times of the year. A variety of species of perching birds enhances birding opportunities. Unusual rock formations and steep sided canyons characterize much of the WSA. Landforms are interesting and scenic, serving as excellent photographic subjects.

Special Features: Vivid examples of volcanic processes are presnt within The Wall WSA. The Pancake Range provides important habitat for mountain lions, golden eagles, prarie falcons, and various other types of raptors.

Livestock

There is one livestock permittee authorized grazing use on the Nyala Allotment partially located within the WSA. Use is currently estimated at about 1,100 AUMs yearly. There is one existing fenceline in the northwest corner of the WSA (Domestic Livestock and Watershed Map).

Recreation

Recreation use is small in The Wall Wsa. Some motor vehicle related recreation occurs, usually on existing roads and ways. Limited hunter use occurs within the WSA.

Minerals

The general geologic make-up of the WSA is volcanic in nature with approximately one-half of the area covered by alluvium in the southeast. The bedrock has been moderately deformed by high angle faulting. The northwest boundary of the WSA coincides with the southeast edge of the Lunar Lake Caldera.

Mineral resource potential throughout the study area is low. There are no mining districts near the WSA (Mineral Potential Map).

Potential for oil and gas and geothermal resources are also low. There are 211 post-FLPMA leases on 24,320 acres within the WSA (Table 3-1).

Watershed

Erosion is not a major problem in this area. Generally, the watershed areas that have been developed are stable. Precipitation in this area falls into the eight to 12 inch zone, normally coming in winter snow, late spring storms or summer thundershowers. There are no high erosion potential areas within the WSA.

Wildlife Habitat

The Wall WSA possibly supports a few mule deer yearlong on the top of the mesas. Mule deer habitat is limited. Pronghorn antelope pass through this WSA in the vicinity of Lunar Lake and Railroad Valley (Wildlife-Big Game Habitat Map).

Riparian communities are also limited within this WSA. They are found near the few springs in the area.

SOUTH REVEILLE WSA NV -060-112

General Characteristics

The South Reveille WSA encompasses approximately 106,000 acres in an oblong shape, measuring 17 miles north to south and from six to 13 miles east to west (Wilderness Areas Map). The study area covers a good portion of the Reveille Range and Reveille Valley. The rugged mountainous core is flanked on the west by Reveille Valley and on the east by Railroad Valley. The core is dissected by east-west running canyons. Elevations range from 5,000 feet in the valleys to 8,910 feet on top of Reveille Peak. Vegetative cover is pinyon pine/juniper at the upper elevations and northern desert shrub type at the lower elevations.

Wilderness Values

Naturalness: Within the boundaries of the South Reveille WSA are approximately five miles of vehicle ways, a five surface-acre water impoundment, and five spring developments. The vehicle ways are found in the valley areas. The water impoundment is located adjacent to the western boundary of the WSA. The spring developments and water troughs are located in the northern and central portions of the WSA and adjacent to the western boundary of the WSA (Domestic Livestock and Watershed Map). Total acreage involved is approximately twenty acres.

Natural screening within the WSA, both vegetative and topographic, is sufficient to offset any potential adverse impacts associated wtih sights and sounds occurring outside the boundaries of the WSA.

Opportunities for Solitude: Topography varies a great deal within this WSA. The southern part of the Reveille Range, which forms the heart of the WSA, rises up from a large expanse of roadless valley bottom lands which have an elevation of about 6,000 feet. The range is a thick, multi-ridged strip of steep-sided mountains rising to crests and flat-topped summits between 8,000 and 9,000 feet. Sheer cliffs from the mountain sides in many places and large canyons with steep walls run out to the edge of the valleys. These canyons are further divided by many small canyons joining at all angles with rock outcroppings, spires, rockfaces, and ridges with sheer vertical drops of hundreds of feet. In many places a hiker could walk 50 yards in almost any direction and disappear from sight. In addition to the topographic screening, the upper slopes and mountain tops are covered with an abundant pinyon pine and juniper woodland that provides good vegetative screening in all directions.

The topographic and vegetative features combined with the size and the shape of the WSA would offer the user a nearly endless choice of secluded spots. There are abundant places where one would rarely, if ever, expect to be disturbed by the sights and sounds of others.

Opportunities for Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are provided by hiking, backpacking, hunting, horseback riding, mountain or rock climbing, photography, bird watching and sightseeing.

Recreationists could choose to camp in a sagebrush covered flat and hills, sagebrush covered hillsides and canyons, or pinyon pine and juniper covered mesas and mountains. Potable water sources are present along the eastern side of the range and in the central portion of the WSA. Two specific attractions in the WSA would be Fang Ridge and Reveille Peak. Many other places in the range offer attractions that could be objectives for a hike. Trips along the length of the range would be challenging and offer spectacular views. Trips across the WSA would provide a transect of several Great Basin Province ecosystems. Parts of the WSA, covered with sagebrush, would be fairly easy to travel through. In the mountains, routes would have to be carefully selected due to the rugged terrain.

The abundance of large cliffs and outcroppings offer a variety of rock climbing routes. Many of the mountain tops are accessible, from certain directions, only by technical climbing routes. This would add a challenging dimension to mountain climbing in the WSA.

Horseback trips could vary considerably in length due to the large size of the WSA. Water is available at springs within the area. Horses would increase access to the WSA for hunters who would be able to pack out game. Horses could be turned out to graze, but would have to be hobbled to prevent them from being run off by wild horses present in the area.

Chukar partridge, mule deer, pronghorn antelope, and mountain lion are game species found in the WSA. The terrain and vegetation are such that a hunter could move freely through much of the WSA. Many of the hillsides and all the valley bottom lands are covered with sparse, low growing desert plants that would enable a hunter to spot game from a long way off and afford him with an open shot.

The rock cliffs and outcroppings around Fang Ridge and Reveille Peak are impressive. Sunrise and sunsets turn the rock faces into rainbows of pastel colors. Wildlife sightseeing opportunities are readily available with mule deer, pronghorn antelope, coyote, redtail hawk, prarie falcon, numerous other birds and reptiles of a wide variety present. The sheer cliffs and rugged mountains provide habitat for mountain lions as well. Wild horses are also plentiful throughout the WSA.

Special Features: Rugged mountain scenery, colorful rock outcroppings and broad vistas of the Basin and Range Province are available.

The Reveille Range, like most mountain ranges in central Nevada, provides important habitat for mountain lion, golden eagles, prarie falcons and other raptors. Wild and free roaming horses are present within the South Reveille WSA.

Two Native American cultural resource sites within the WSA have been identified. They consist of a rock wall alignment and the pole supports for a lean-to.

Livestock

The Reveille grazing allotment falls partly within the South Reveille WSA. It has one permittee authorized for yearlong use of about 4,800 AUMs. The permittee currently uses motor vehicles to gather livestock in the valley areas. There are five private waters within the study area used to hold grazing preference. There is one existing spring development (Domestic Livestock and Watershed Map).

Recreation

The greatest amount of recreation use in this unit is associated with mule deer hunting. This is generally concentrated in the central mountain area and along Fang Ridge. A road entering into the WSA on the east side and terminating at the ridge provides hunter access. Most other recreation use is spent in such pursuits as hiking, backpacking, mountain climbing, horseback riding, etc.

Virtually all recreation use in the area involves the use of motor vehicles for access or recreation itself.

Minerals

The majority of the mountainous portion of the WSA is composed of volcanic extrusive rock. The valleys are mostly alluvium with a large basalt flow located in Reveille Valley in the northwest portion of the WSA. There is a small exposure of sedimentary rocks in the far northern part of the mountainous area. There is a minor amount of high angle faulting within the WSA.

The northern end of the WSA falls within the Reveille Mining District. This district has produced approximately $1,000,000 in silver, gold, antimony, zinc and lead. The ore was found in vein deposits along faults and fractures in the sedimentary and volcanic rocks.

Mineral potential in the northern end of the WSA is good for base, ferrous and precious metals. There is also good potential found in the southeast end of the WSA (Mineral Potential Map). There are a total of 45 pre-FLPMA claims and 314 post-FLPMA claims located within the WSA, most within the northern portion in the Reveille Mining District (Mining Claims and Mineral Leases Map). Outside of this area potential is low or speculative.

Oil and gas potential is good within the valley areas of the WSA. The remainder of the WSA has low potential. The entire WSA has low potential for geothermal resources. There are a total of 46 post-FLPMA oil and gas leases on 53,760 acres within the WSA (Table 3-1).

Watershed

The watershed areas that developed within the WSA are generally stable, except where surface disturbance has altered the natural run-off pattern. There are two areas of high erosion potential within the WSA encompassing 23,800 acres (Domestic Livestock and Watershed Map). Precipitation usually occurs in the form of winter snow, late spring storms and summer thundershowers; the latter attributing to the majority of erosion problems.

Wildlife Habitat

The South Reveille WSA supports a small yearlong herd of mule deer. They use the upper elevations near Reveille Peak and Fang Ridge, utilizing the areas near springs and cliffrose (Wildlife-Big Game Habitats Map).

Pronghorn antelope occur on both the western and eastern flanks of the WSA in Reveille and Railroad Valleys. Important spring use areas for pronghorn antelope may be found near the springs adjacent to the base of the mountains.

A limited number of riparian communities occur within this WSA.

BLUE EAGLE NV -060-158/199

General Characteristics

Blue Eagle WSA lies in the Grant Range and includes a small portion of Railroad Valley. The area is oblong in shape, measuring approximately 18 miles north to south and seven miles east to west (Wilderness Areas Map). It encompasses 59,560 acres of high mountains with deep, narrow winding drainages and large cliffs. The lowest elevation is 4,800 feet in Railroad Valley on the west; the highest elevation is 9,561 feet on top of Blue Eagle Peak.

Pinyon pine/juniper, mountain mahogany, aspen and white fir trees dominate the higher elevations, with small stands of bristlecone pine near Blue Eagle Peak.

Wilderness Values

Naturalness: Within the boundaries of the Blue Eagle WSA are approximately 15 miles of vehicle ways and five spring developments. The vehicle ways are found in the valley portions of the WSA. The spring developments and water troughs are located in the northern corner and adjacent to the eastern boundary of the WSA. Total acreage involved is approximately 20 acres.

Natural screening within the WSA, both vegetative and topographic, is sufficient to offset any potential adverse impacts associated with sights and sounds occurring outside the boundaries of the WSA.

Opportunities for Solitude: High mountains with several deep, narrow and winding drainages dominate the landscape in this area. The majority of the WSA is covered by a pinyon pine and juniper woodland. Other trees found in the WSA are curlleaf mountain mahogany, aspen, white fir and bristlecone pine.

All of the factors of size, configuration, and natural screening contribute to the ability of the user to find a secluded spot. The WSA has natural screening available in the varied topography. Topographic changes can be very abrupt as in the many canyons, or deliberate as in the gently rolling hills in the eastern half of the WSA. This diversity in topographic change provides for isolation and seclusion. The denseness of vegetation restricts the visibility of the user so as to give them a more complete feeling of isolation.

Opportunities for Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are provided by hiking, backpacking, hunting, horseback riding, mountain or rock climbing, photography, bird watching and sightseeing.

This area is characterized by deep cutting canyons and 9,000 foot peaks which contain pinyon pine/juniper woodland. Camping opportunities would be present in the canyons, on Blue Eagle Peak, throughout the woodland areas and in the meadow regions. The slope in much of the area is too steep to allow some types of camping opportunities.

Terrain would make hiking an interesting activity. A destination point for any hiking trip would be Blue Eagle Peak at an elevation of 9,561 feet. The peak itself is composed of tiers of massively bedded limestone. A person would pass through sagebrush flats, pinyon pine and juniper woodlands, aspen stands, white fir stands, and bristlecone pine on the way to the top of Blue Eagle Peak.

Huntable species include mule deer, mountain lion and chukar partridge. Ease of hunter movement is considered fair due to the rugged terrain.

Some variety in colors and contrast of the soil, rocks and vegetation exists. There is a harmonious variation in form, texture, pattern and type of vegetation. Wildlife, such as sheep, coyote, rabbit and game and nongame birds are attracted to the numerous springs in the area, creating excellent wildlife observation opportunities.

Special Features: Rugged mountain scenery, colorful rock outcroppings, and broad vistas of the Basin and Range Province are available.

Bighorn sheep occur in the Blue Eagle WSA. All mountain ranges in central Nevada, including the Grant Range, provide important habitat for mountain lions as well as golden eagles, prarie falcons, and various other raptors.

Bristlecone pine trees are found in the Blue Eagle WSA. Bristlecone pines are of special interest because they are the oldest living things known and are found in only a few high elevation areas in the United States. White fir trees are also present within the Blue Eagle WSA; these trees are of special interest because they are rarely found in the mountains of central Nevada.

A Native American cultural resource site, a pictograph, has been located within the WSA.

Livestock

There are two livestock allotments partially within the Blue Eagle WSA with four permittees authorized use. One permittee is authorized yearlong use, one is authorized use from 03/01 - 01/15 yearly, and the third has split use with another permittee on 12/01 - 04/30 and one on 06/01 - 08/31. There are about 1,100 AUMs of use within the WSA. There is one developed spring, a pipeline and associated water trough on the eastern edge of the WSA (Domestic Livestock and Watershed Map)

Recreation

Traditional forms of recreation occur throughout the area. Most backpacking, hiking, mountain climbing and mineral prospecting have some motor vehicle use involved. This usually occurs on weekends and holidays. There is some hunter use within the WSA.

Minerals

Geologically, the Blue Eagle WSA is complex. A sequence of volcanic rocks is exposed in the northern and eastern portions of the WSA, while the remainder of the area contains sedimentary rocks. The rock areas are cut by high angle faults, with folds and thrust faults also present in the sedimentary rocks.

The Currant Mining District lies at the northern end of the WSA and the Troy Mining District is at the southern end. Both districts have produced valuable tungsten, gold and silver deposits. The Troy Mining District produced approximately $250,000 in tungsten primarily.

Mineral potential for base, ferrous and precious metals is good in the northwest corner of the WSA, but low in the remainder of the area (Mineral Potential Map). There are a total of 148 post-FLPMA claims in the WSA, most located in the northern end (Mining Claims and Mineral Leases Map).

The Railroad Valley portion of the WSA has high potential for oil and gas resources, but there is low potential for geothermal resources throughout the study area. There are a total of 29 oil and gas leases covering a large portion of the WSA (Table 3-1). None of these leases are pre-FLPMA.

Watershed

Erosion in this WSA is not a major problem. Erosion of the watershed is primarily caused by heavy thundershower action. The watershed is generally stable, except in areas where surface disturbance has altered the natural run-off patterns. There are no high erosion potential areas within the WSA.

Wildlife Habitat

The Blue Eagle WSA supports a small mule deer wintering population on the western slopes of the WSA. The habitat is marginal for mule deer winter range. Mule deer summer in the vicinity of Blue Eagle Mountain and Andrews Peak. They utilize the mountain brush and mountain meadow types (Wildlife-Big Game Habitats Map).

Bighorn sheep are reported in this WSA, however, populations are low. The animals utilize the rough, rocky terrain near Blue Eagle Mountain.

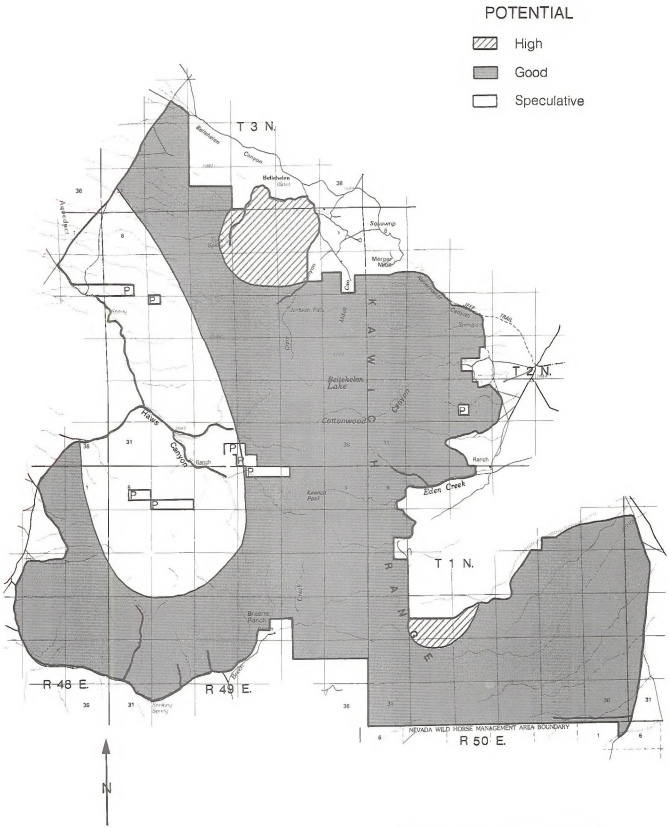
Riparian communities are located within Heath Canyon and at the numerous springs and seeps within the WSA.

Kawich WSA
Maps

DOMESTIC LIVESTOCK AND WATERSHED

KAWICH—NV-060-019

LEGEND



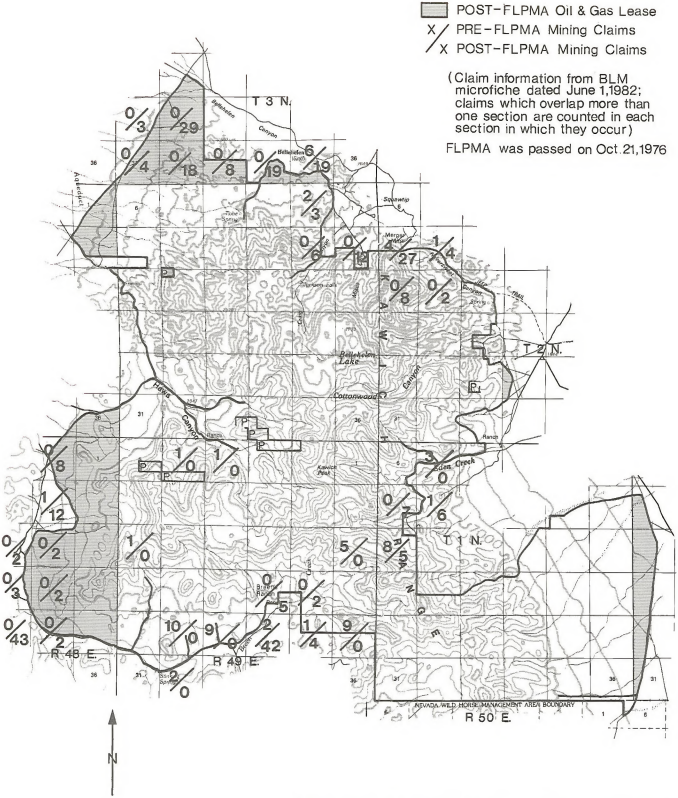
1 0 1 2 3 Kilometers

1 0 1 Miles

MINERAL POTENTIAL

KAWICH—NV-060-019

Base Ferrous, and Precious Metals Mineral Potentials (after Fugro National, Inc., 1981)



1 0 1 2 3 Kilometers

1 0 1 Miles

MINING CLAIMS & MINERAL LEASES

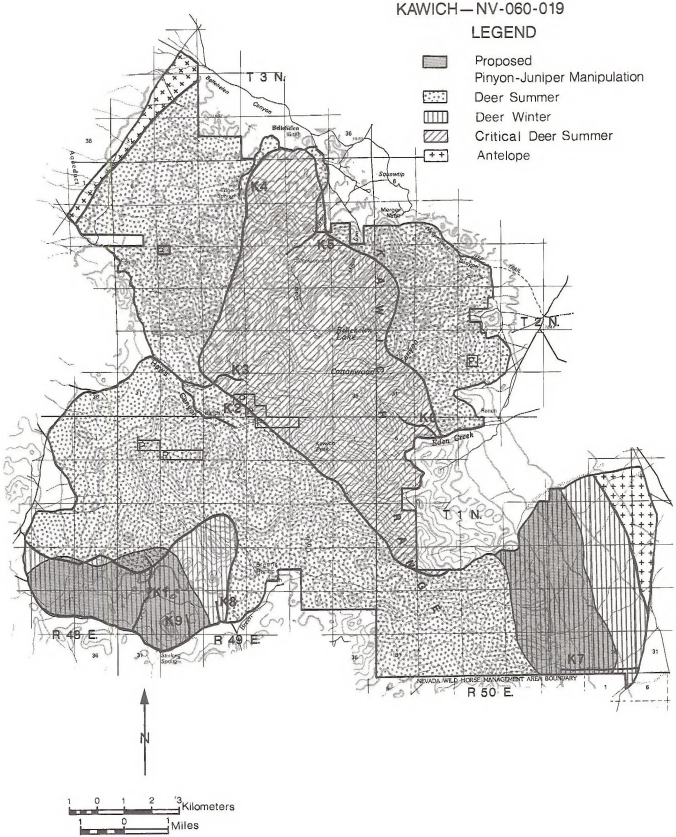
KAWICH—NV-060-019

WILDLIFE--BIG GAME HABITATS

KAWICH—NV-060-019

LEGEND

- Proposed Pinyon-Juniper Manipulation
- Deer Summer
- Deer Winter
- Critical Deer Summer
- Antelope



Rawhide Mountain WSA Maps

DOMESTIC LIVESTOCK AND WATERSHED

RAWHIDE MOUNTAIN—NV-060-059

N

1 0 1 2 3 Kilometers

1 0 1 Miles

LEGEND

High Erosion Potential

Existing Range Facilities

Fence

Proposed Range Facilities

Well

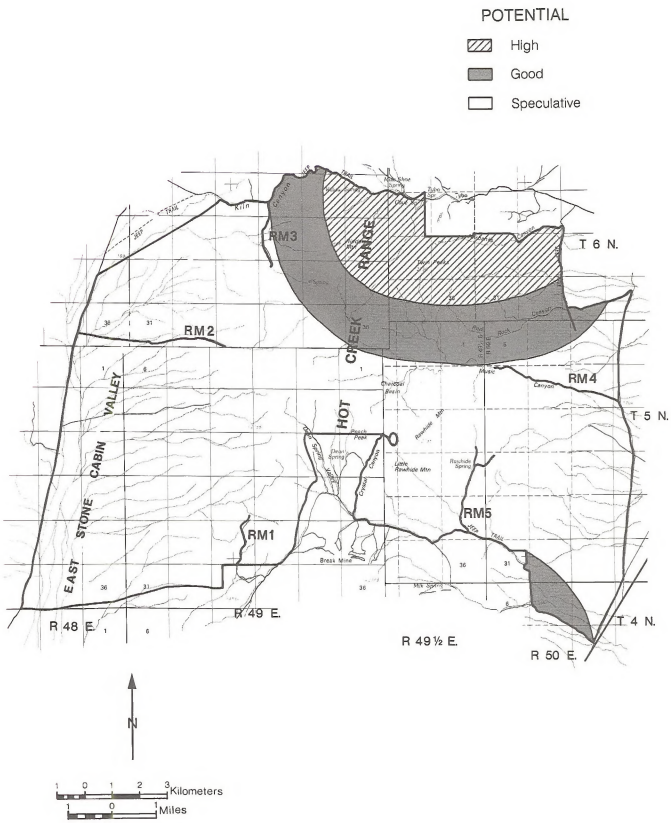
Water Trough

Pipeline

Developed Spring

Fence

Private Water Right



MINERAL POTENTIAL

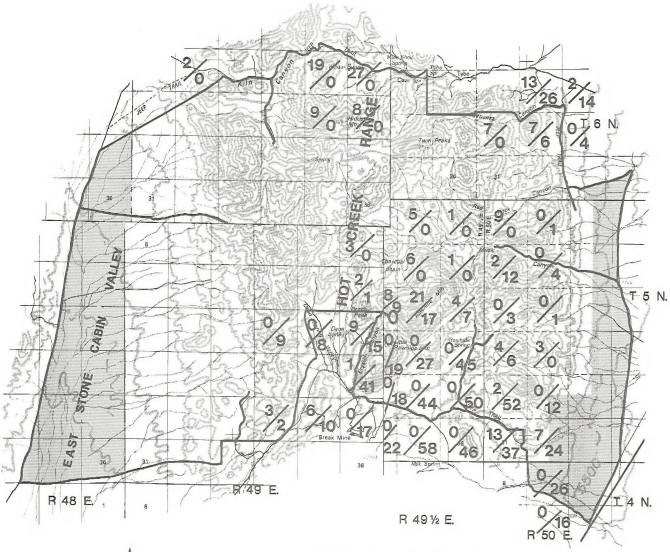
RAWHIDE MOUNTAIN—NV-060-059

Base Ferrous, and Precious Metals Mineral Potentials (after Fugro National, Inc., 1981)

POST-FLPMA Oil & Gas Lease

X/ PRE-FLPMA Mining Claims

/X POST-FLPMA Mining Claims



(Claim information from BLM microfiche dated June 1,1982; claims which overlap more than one section are counted in each section in which they occur)

FLPMA was passed on Oct.21,1976

N

1 0 1 2 3 Kilometers

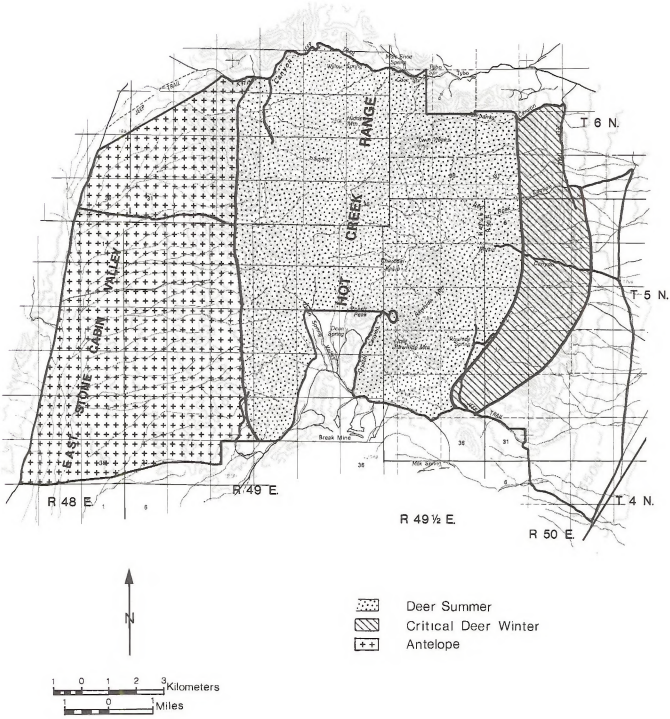
1 0 1 Miles

MINING CLAIMS & MINERAL LEASES

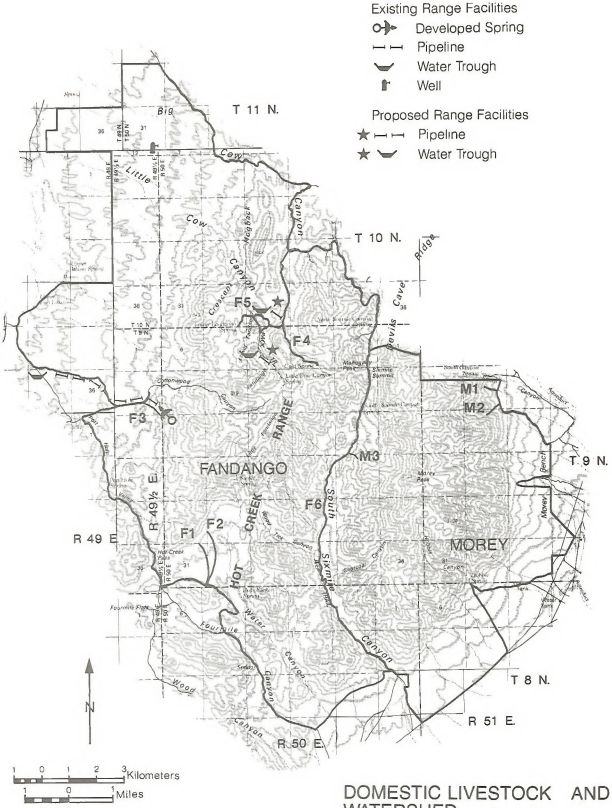
RAWHIDE MOUNTAIN—NV-060-059

WILDLIFE-BIG GAME HABITATS

RAWHIDE MOUNTAIN—NV-060-059

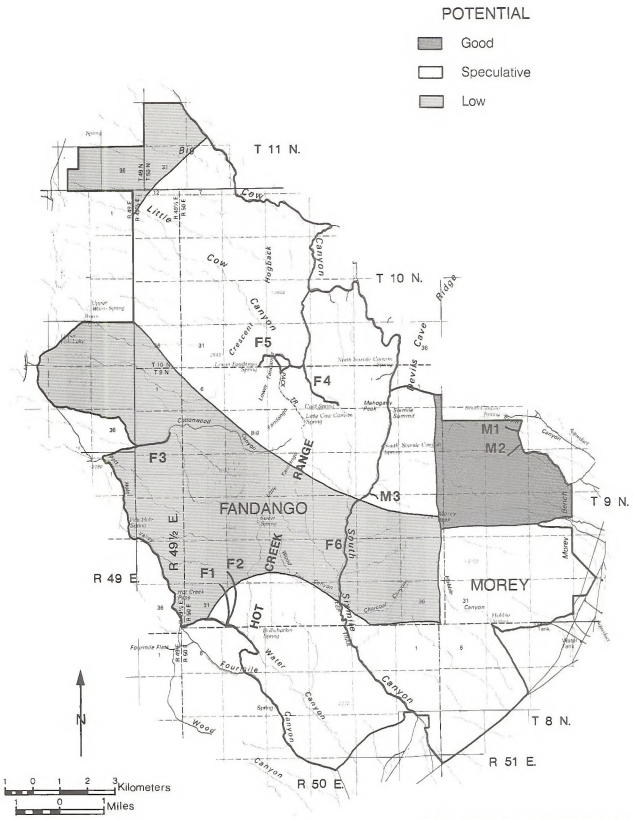


Fandango WSA–
Morey WSA Maps



DOMESTIC LIVESTOCK AND WATERSHED

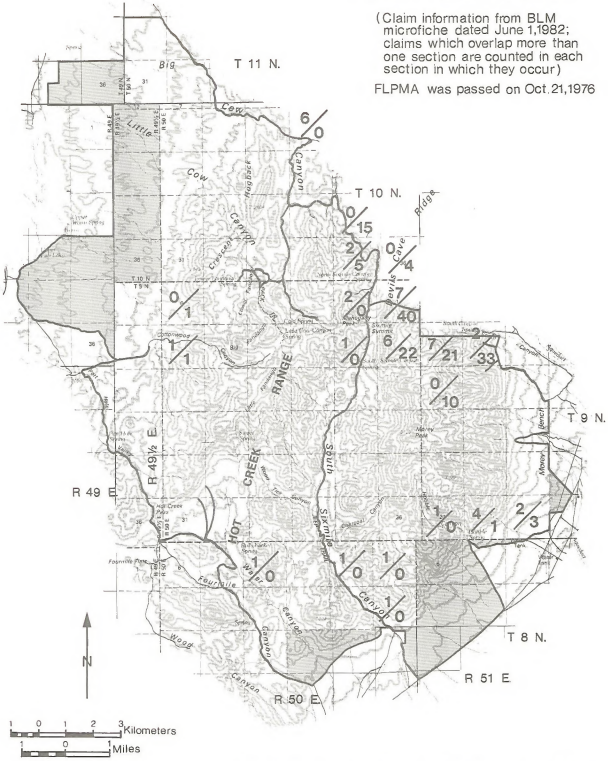
FANDANGO—NV-060-190
MOREY—NV-060-191



MINERAL POTENTIAL

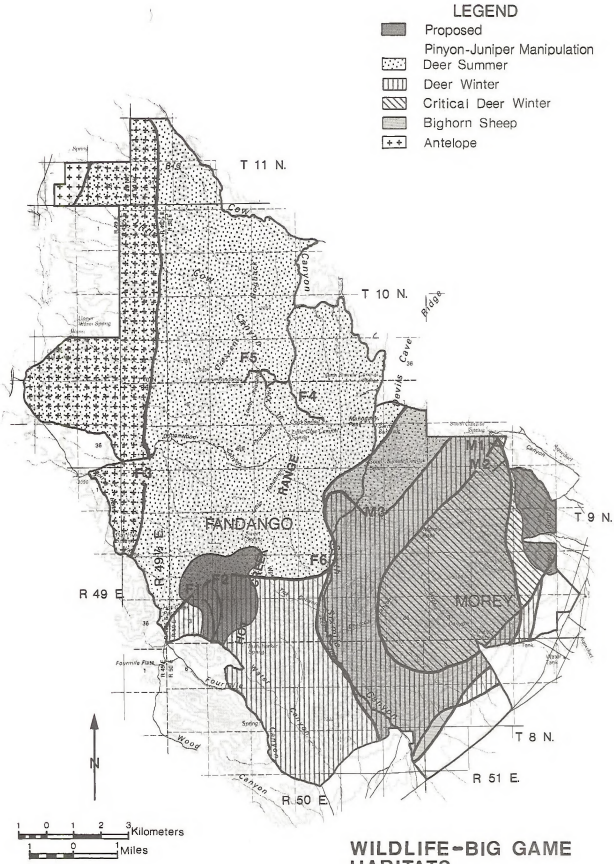
FANDANGO—NV-060-190
MOREY—NV-060-191

Base Ferrous and Precious Metals Mineral Potentials (after Fugro National, Inc., 1981)



MINING CLAIMS & MINERAL LEASES

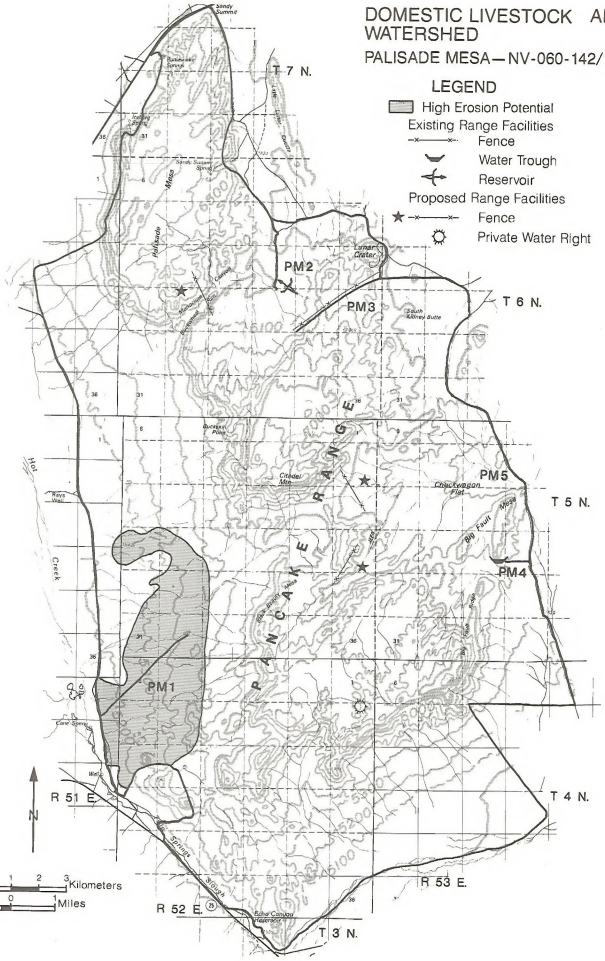
FANDANGO—NV-060-190
MOREY—NV-060-191



WILDLIFE-BIG GAME HABITATS

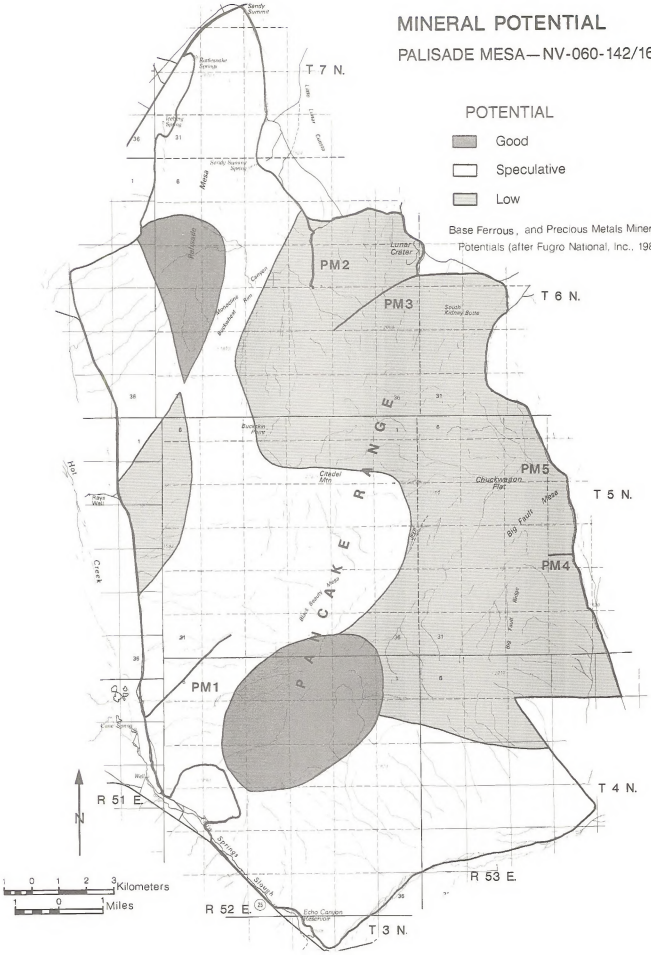
FANDANGO—NV-060-190
MOREY—NV-060-191

Palisade Mesa WSA Maps


DOMESTIC LIVESTOCK AND WATERSHED
PALISADE MESA—NV-060-142/162
LEGEND
High Erosion Potential
Existing Range Facilities
Fence
Water Trough
Reservoir
Proposed Range Facilities
Fence
Private Water Right
T 7 N.
T 6 N.
T 5 N.
T 4 N.
T 3 N.
R 51 E.
R 52 E.
R 53 E.
PM1
PM2
PM3
PM4
PM5
PANCAKE RANGE
Sandy Summit
Bristlecone Spring
Mineral Spring
Palisade Mesa
Lunar Crater
South Kiln Butte
Bickford Pass
Citadel Mts.
Concentration Flat
Big Fault
Hot Creek
Cow Springs
Spring Valley
Kilometers
Miles
N

MINERAL POTENTIAL

PALISADE MESA—NV-060-142/162



MINING CLAIMS & MINERAL LEASES

PALISADE MESA—NV-060-142/162

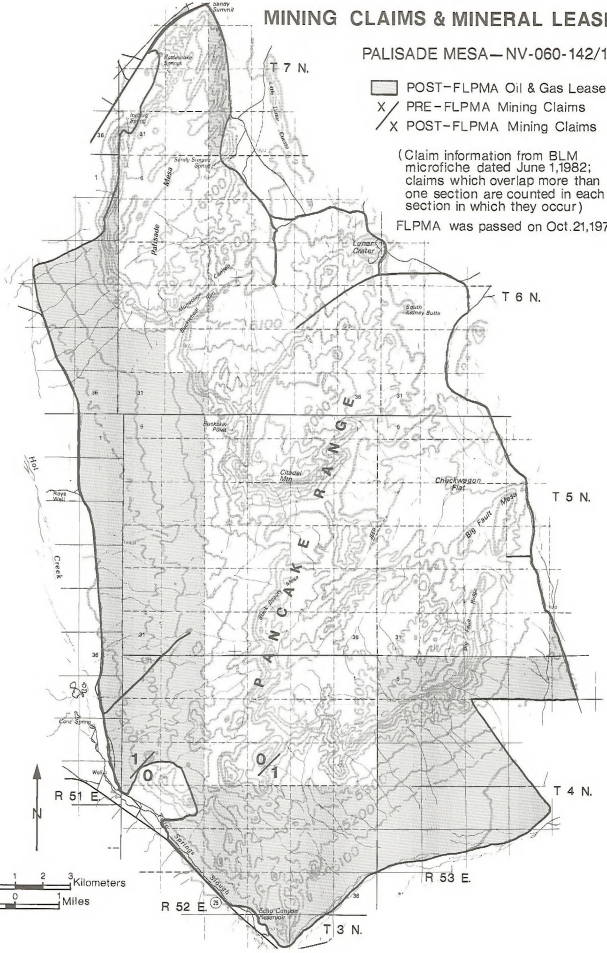
POST-FLPMA Oil & Gas Lease

X/ PRE-FLPMA Mining Claims

/X POST-FLPMA Mining Claims

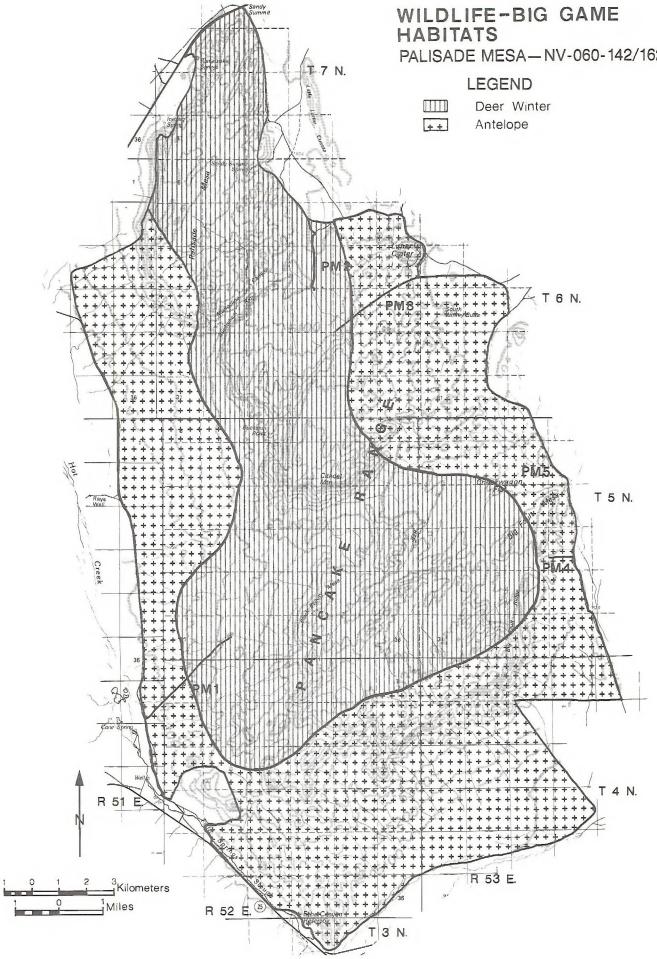
(Claim information from BLM microfiche dated June 1,1982; claims which overlap more than one section are counted in each section in which they occur)

FLPMA was passed on Oct.21,1976


T 7 N.
T 6 N.
T 5 N.
T 4 N.
T 3 N.
R 51 E
R 52 E
R 53 E
PANCAKE RANGE
Palisade Mesa
Big Fault Mesa
Chuckwagon Flat
Cobble Mtn
Bustillos Pillar
Fourm Kelley Butte
Cowan Dome
Sandy Summit
Sandy Summit Spring
Hot Creek
Hot Creek Spring
Cane Spring
Cane Springs Wash
Cane Springs Reservoir
Kelly Creek
Kelly Creek Spring
Kelly Creek Reservoir
Kelly Wash
Big Wash
Big Wash Reservoir
Big Wash Spring
Big Wash Pillar
Big Wash Mesa
Big Wash Wash
Big Wash Creek
Big Wash Canyon
Big Wash Canyon Reservoir
Big Wash Canyon Spring
Big Wash Canyon Pillar
Big Wash Canyon Mesa
Big Wash Canyon Wash
Big Wash Canyon Creek

WILDLIFE-BIG GAME HABITATS

PALISADE MESA—NV-060-142/162

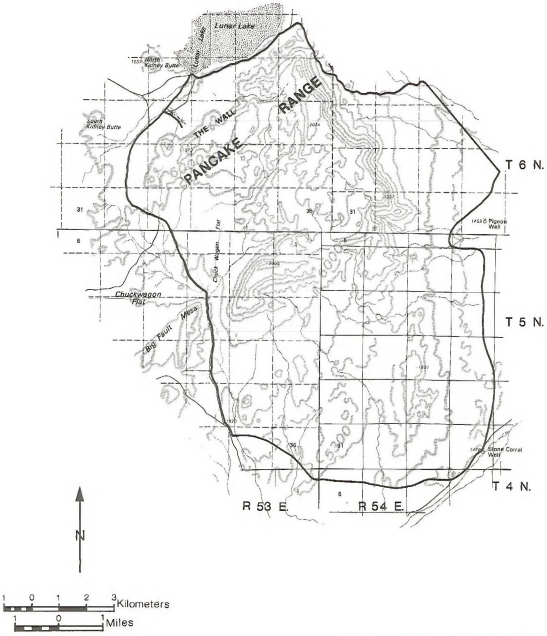


The Wall
WSA Maps

LEGEND

Existing Range Facilities

Fence



1 0 1 2 3 Kilometers

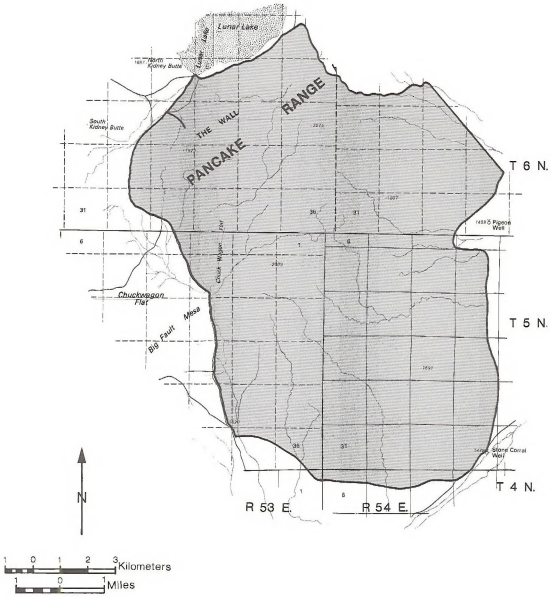
1 0 1 Miles

DOMESTIC LIVESTOCK AND WATERSHED

THE WALL—NV-060-163

POTENTIAL

Low



MINERAL POTENTIAL

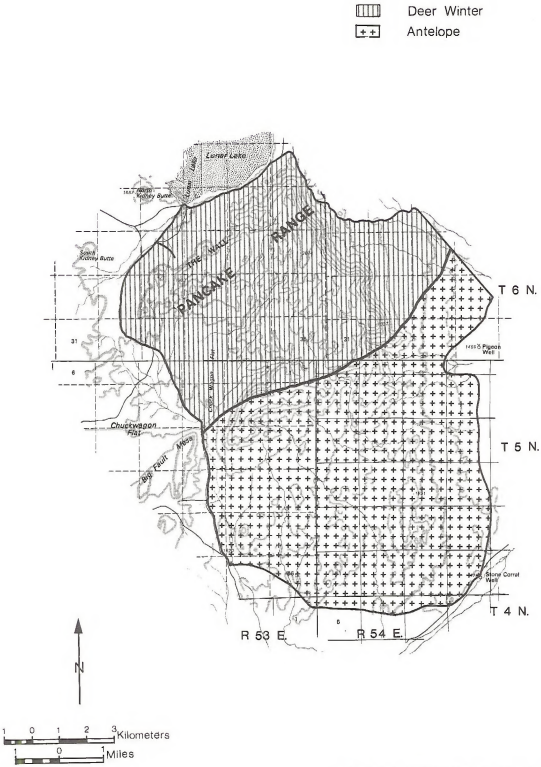
THE WALL—NV-060-163

Base Ferrous, and Precious Metals Mineral Potentials (after Fugro National, Inc., 1981)

POST-FLPMA Oil & Gas Lease

MINING CLAIMS & MINERAL LEASES

THE WALL—NV-060-163



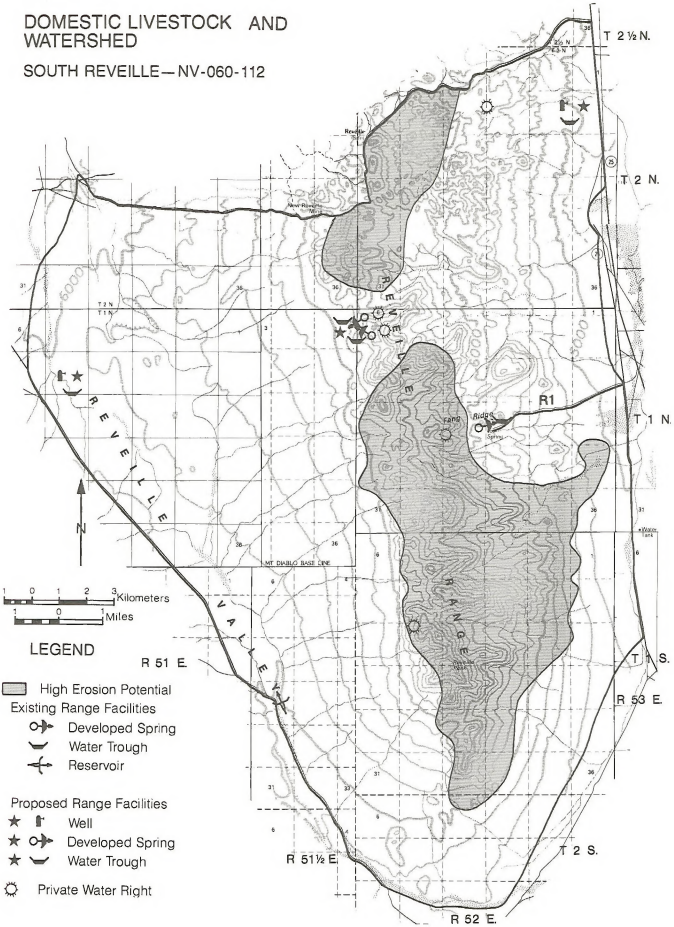
WILDLIFE–BIG GAME HABITATS

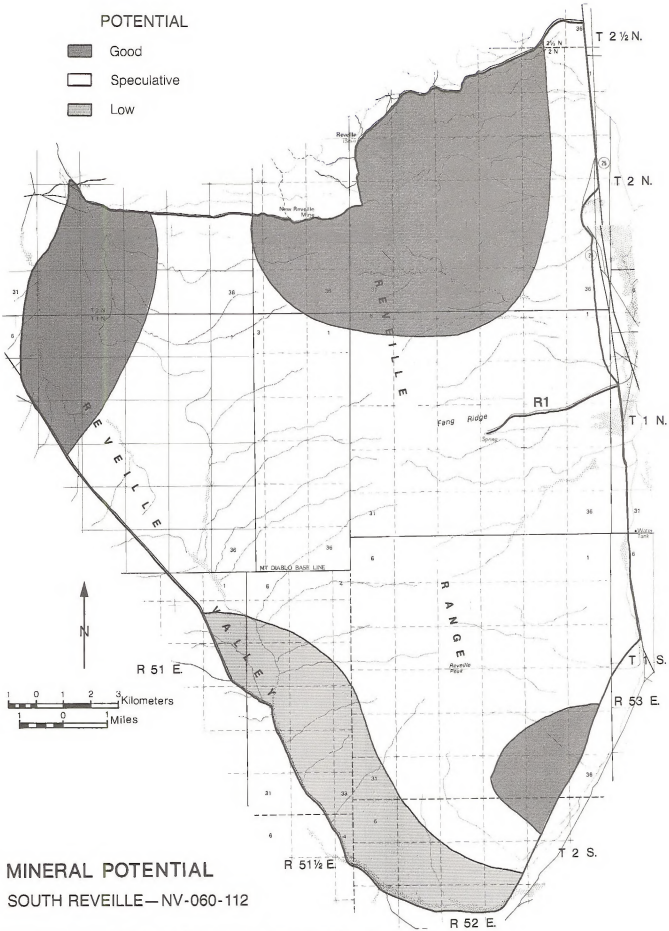
THE WALL—NV-060-163

South Reveille WSA Maps

DOMESTIC LIVESTOCK AND WATERSHED

SOUTH REVEILLE—NV-060-112

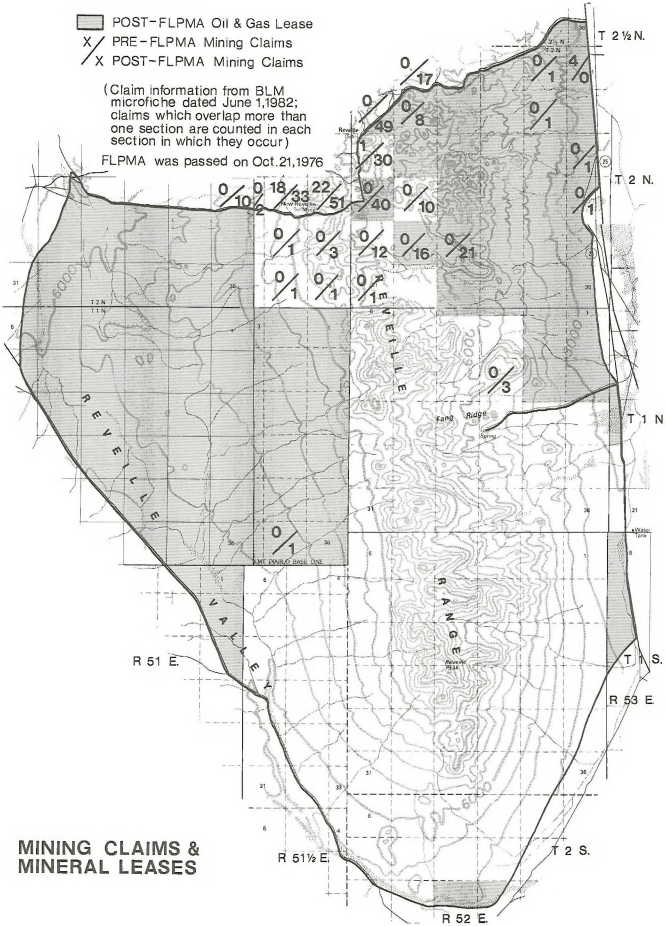




MINERAL POTENTIAL

SOUTH REVEILLE—NV-060-112

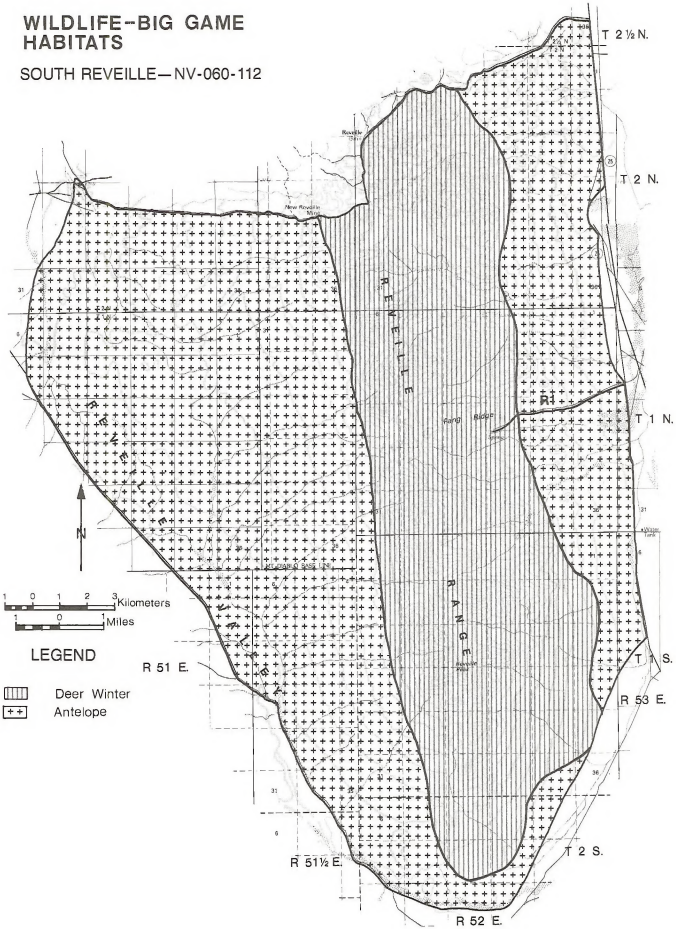
Base Ferrous, and Precious Metals Mineral Potentials (after Fugro National, Inc., 1981)



MINING CLAIMS & MINERAL LEASES

WILDLIFE–BIG GAME HABITATS

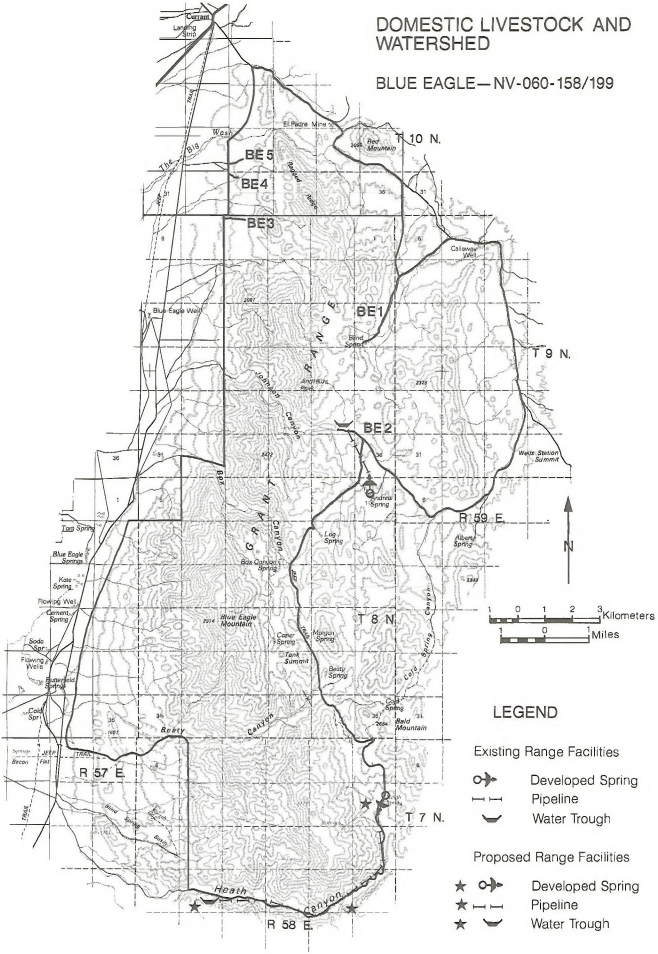
SOUTH REVEILLE—NV-060-112

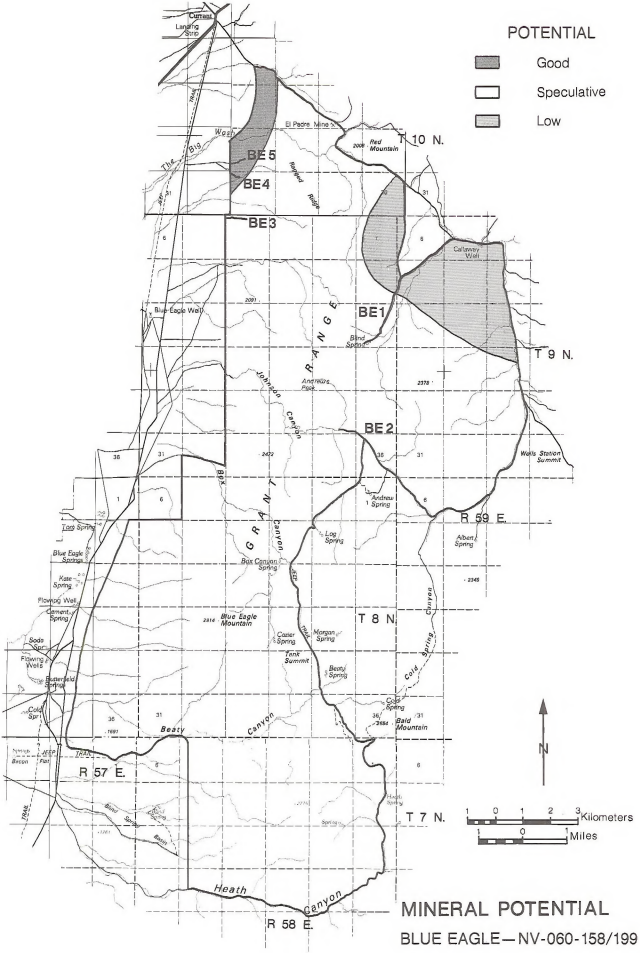


Blue Eagle WSA Maps

DOMESTIC LIVESTOCK AND WATERSHED

BLUE EAGLE—NV-060-158/199

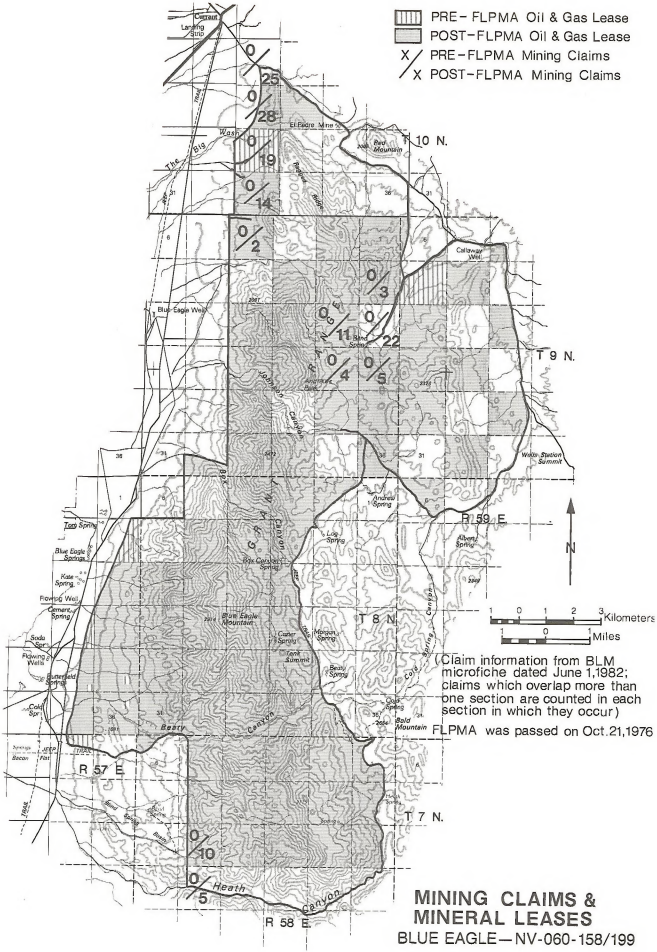




MINERAL POTENTIAL

BLUE EAGLE—NV-060-158/199

Base Ferrous, and Precious Metals Mineral Potentials (after Fugro National, Inc., 1981)



(Claim information from BLM microfiche dated June 1,1982; claims which overlap more than one section are counted in each section in which they occur)

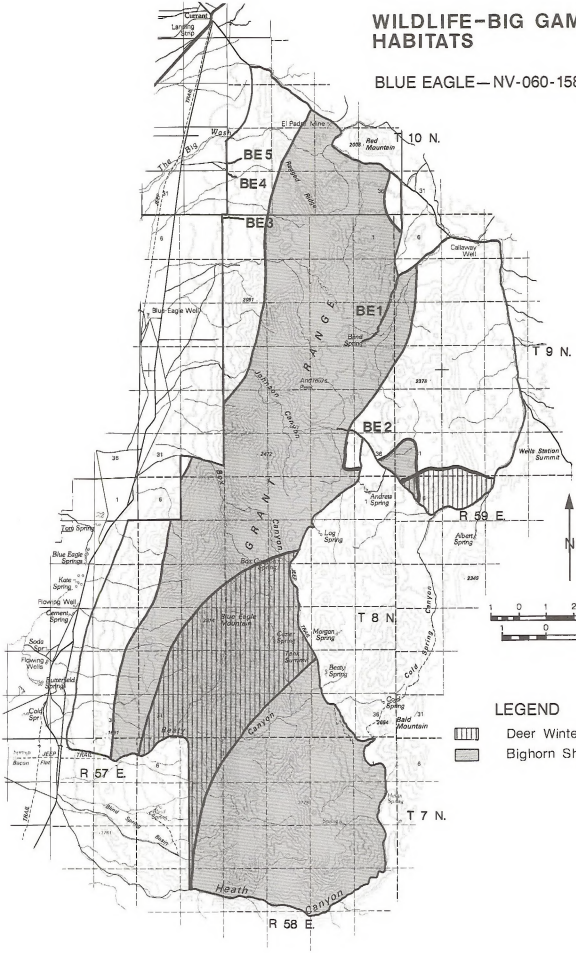
FLPMA was passed on Oct.21,1976

MINING CLAIMS & MINERAL LEASES

BLUE EAGLE—NV-060-158/199

WILDLIFE-BIG GAME HABITATS

BLUE EAGLE—NV-060-158/199



Chapter 4

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Kawich WSA (NV-060-019)

Proposed Action (No Wilderness)

Under the proposed action, the entire 54,320 acres of the Kawich WSA would be recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to the development of mineral resources and the resulting impacts on wilderness values in the long term.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The immediate impact of nondesignation would be important, since a high level of exploration and development activity is anticipated in the first few years if the area is not designated wilderness. It is projected there would be five plans of operation per year for the first few years. Based on past experience, it is expected that each project would have up to two miles of road and eight pads for a total disturbed area of five acres. The total disturbance in the WSA is expected to be about 25 acres per year. The results of the exploration will determine the overall impact on the WSA in the future.

Three developments of the 393 existing mining claims in the WSA are anticipated due to the high potential for precious metals. In the foreseeable future, wilderness values would be lost as a result of mineral development in the area between Tobe Spring and Craig Canyon drainage, Eden Creek, and Breen Ranch areas. For the purpose of this analysis it is assumed that in the foreseeable future there would be three discoveries for mineral resources in this WSA: 1) A small underground gold mine on the border of the WSA in the Eden Creek Area. The access will be from outside the WSA. About ten acres inside the WSA will be disturbed with the mine and tailings; 2) A small open pit precious metals mine on the border of the WSA at the Tobe Spring Road. Access will be from Stone Cabin Valley. About twenty acres inside the WSA will be disturbed including the mine, pit, and one mile of road; and 3) A small open pit precious metals mine at the border of the WSA in the Breen Ranch area. Access will be from Breen Ranch. About five acres inside the WSA will be disturbed.

The mineral development activities would be obvious in the WSAs Eden Creek, Tobe Spring, and Breen Ranch areas. These are the portions of the WSA that are most likely to be used by the public. Therefore, the WSA would no longer appear natural to the average visitor.

Mineral development activities would adversely impact the wilderness value of solitude. Sights and sounds from traffic and construction related to mineral development would lower the quality of solitude in the WSA's major drainages. Outstanding opportunities for solitude would be lost.

Approximately 9,620 acres of prescribed burning would be accomplished. This would have a negligible effect on the area's naturalness since fire would be reintroduced into a fire dependent ecosystem.

Recreational off-road vehicle use would have an adverse impact on solitude. However, this impact is expected to be slight since ORV use is estimated to be less than 950 visits annually and is expected to remain below 1,300 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

Other recreational uses would increase slightly, but would remain at levels below 800 visits annually for the foreseeable future. This increase would not significantly impact opportunities for solitude.

No new range developments are planned in the WSA and maintenance activities would not change. Grazing facility maintenance and construction actions would not effect wilderness values in the WSA.

> Conclusion. The Kawich WSA's wilderness values of size, naturalness, and outstanding opportunities for solitude would be lost.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

The WSA would be open to ORV use. One mile of mine access road would be constructed within the WSA making the central portion of the WSA more accessible to ORV use. Recreational ORV use would remain below the 1,300 visits annually over the foreseeable future.

> Conclusion. Recreational ORV use would remain below 1,300 visits annually. There would be a slight increase in recreational ORV use.

Impacts on Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the WSA would remain open for mineral entry and mineral leasing. All mineral resources would be available for development. This includes 2,880 acres of high potential and 37,840 acres of moderate potential for occurrence of metallic minerals, 7,040 acres of moderate potential for occurrence of oil and gas resources, and 7,040 acres with a moderate potential for occurrence of geothermal.

Development of the metallic minerals is likely because of high quality deposits. Development of oil and gas and geothermal resources is unlikely because of the lack of leases, exploration, industry interest, the high costs associated with test wells, the area's inaccessibility and location outside the WSA of a known oil and gas province, and better potential for reserves in other areas.

Because all potential minerals would remain available for development, there would be no impact to development of potential mineral resources.

Conclusion. There would probably be an acceleration of exploration and development of precious metals resources in the Kawich WSA.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

There would be no adverse impact on grazing facility maintenance or construction. Four miles of fence, three miles of pipeline,and two spring developments within the WSA will be maintained. No additional range developments are anticipated.

Conclusion. There would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance or construction in the Kawich WSA.

Impacts on Mule Deer Population

Over the foreseeable future, an increase in road construction, vehicle traffic, and human activities associated mostly with the increase in mineral and energy exploration and development would lead to a reduction in mule deer population. Additional roads will allow vehicle penetration into areas not before accessible, which will increase the hunter visits. This could increase kill rates as well as driving the mule deer to areas of less disturbance.

About 9,000 acres of pinyon and juniper would be thinned for browse re-establishment.

Conclusion. The impact of mineral and energy exploration and development could reduce the mule deer population.

Adverse Impacts Which Cannot be Avoided

The only unavoidable adverse impacts would be these associated with mineral exploration and development. Some of these impacts may be reduced by careful examination and mitigating stipulations in approved Notices of Intent and Plans of Operation. All other impacts would be minor in nature and would tend to balance out each other.

Relationship Between Local Short-Term Uses of Man's Environment and the Maintenance and Enhancement of Long-Term Productivity.

If the WSA is not designated wilderness, all present uses would continue. ORV use and mining exploration and development would reduce wilderness values in the foreseeable future.

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

Mining exploration and development would create an irreversible commitment of the wilderness resource in all or part of this WSA if not designated as wilderness.

Alternative A (All Wilderness)

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the entire 54,320 acres of public land in the Kawich WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to the mineral withdrawal and ORV closure in designated wilderness, the resulting effects on mineral development and recreational ORV use, and the protection of wilderness values.

Impacts on Wilderness Values.

Wilderness values of size, naturalness, opportunities for solitude, and primitive and unconfined recreation, and the supplemental features of diversity of wildlife, vegetation, and topography would be retained in most of the WSA. Wilderness designation would withdraw the WSA from mineral entry.

Three developments of the 393 existing mining claims in the WSA are anticipated to meet the criteria for a valid discovery at the time of designation. In the foreseeable future, wilderness values would be lost as a result of mineral development in the area between Tobe Spring and Craig Canyon drainage, Eden Creek, and Breen Ranch areas. For the purpose of this analysis it is assumed that in the foreseeable future there would be three discoveries for mineral resources in this WSA: 1) A small underground gold mine on the border of the WSA in the Eden Creek Area. The access will be from outside the WSA. About ten acres inside the WSA will be disturbed with the mine and tailings; 2) A small open pit precious metals mine on the border of the WSA at the Tobe Spring Road. Access will be from Stone Cabin Valley. About twenty acres inside the WSA will be disturbed including the mine, pit, and one mile of road; and 3) A small open pit precious metals mine at the border of the WSA in the Breen Ranch area. Access will be from Breen Ranch. About five acres inside the WSA will be disturbed.

Wilderness designation would close the entire 54,320 acre Kawich WSA to all forms of recreational ORV use. This action would eliminate approximately 500 visits of recreational ORV use that are estimated to occur in the area at present. This would improve the area's naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation slightly because of elimination of some surface disturbance. The wilderness experience would improve because visitors would not encounter or hear ORV users in the area.

Due to the ease of access by motorized vehicles on approximately 17 miles of cherrystem roads, management of the entire WSA as wilderness over the foreseeable future may be difficult.

Livestock grazing and range management actions would not affect wilderness values in the WSA because no new range developments are planned in the WSA and maintenance activities would not change.

> Conclusion. Wilderness values would be slightly enhanced on most of the 54,320 acres of the Kawich WSA. The wilderness values of naturalness, and solitude would be lost on approximately 35 acres in the areas of mineral development.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

Wilderness designation would close the entire 54,320 acre Kawich WSA to recreational ORV use. Recreational ORV use of approximately 920 visits would be eliminated annually from the WSA. Public land that offers similar or superior opportunities for recreational ORV use is located throughout the region. Therefore, recreational ORV use foregone in the WSA would be absorbed on surrounding public lands.

> Conclusion. Recreational ORV use of 500 visits would be foregone annually. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

Impacts on Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the Kawich WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry and mineral leasing. Exploration would be eliminated under wilderness designation. This includes high potential for metallic minerals and moderate potential for oil and gas and geothermal resources. Development of oil and gas and geothermal resources is unlikely because of the lack of leases, exploration, industry interest, the high costs associated with test wells, the area's inaccessibility and location outside the WSA of a known oil and gas province and better potential for reserves in other areas. It is assumed that three mines would have production sufficient to support commercial development of the metallic mineral resources. No other development is expected in the WSA.

> Conclusion. No impact to development of precious metals resources would occur. Exploration would be foregone on 54,320 acres of the WSA.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

Maintenance of the four miles of existing fence, three miles of pipeline and two spring developments would not change and no new range developments are planned within the WSA. Therefore, there would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance or construction.

Conclusion. There would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance or construction.

Impacts on Mule Deer Population

In the foreseeable future, wilderness designation would have a significant beneficial effect on big game habitat management. Twenty-seven thousand four hundred and forty acres of deer summer range, 21,120 acres of critical deer summer range, and 5,760 acres of deer winter range would be maintained in good condition as a result of closure of the WSA to ORV use and mineral and energy exploration and development. Prohibition of mechanical manipulation of vegetation would result in a decline of approximately 9,000 acres of deer winter range.

Conclusion. Mule deer population are expected to increase.

Alternative B (Partial Wilderness)

Under this alternative, 45,220 acres of the Kawich WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation and 9,600 acres would be recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to the protection of wilderness values through wilderness designation and the resulting increases in naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Wilderness values of the most spectacular scenery and outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation and naturalness would be retained on 45,220 acres recommended suitable for wilderness designation.

Three developments of the 393 existing mining claims in the WSA are anticipated to meet the criteria for a valid discovery at the time of designation. In the foreseeable future, wilderness values would be lost as a result of mineral development in the area between Tobe Spring and Craig Canyon drainage, Eden Creek, and Breen Ranch areas. For the purpose of this analysis it is assumed that in the foreseeable future there would be three discoveries for mineral resources in this WSA: 1) A small underground gold mine on the border of the WSA in the Eden Creek Area. The access will be from outside the WSA. About ten acres inside the WSA will be disturbed with the mine and tailings; 2) A small open pit precious metals mine on the border of the WSA at the Tobe Spring Road. Access will be from Stone Cabin Valley. About twenty acres inside the WSA will be disturbed including the mine, pit, and one mile of road; and 3) A small open pit precious metals mine at the border of the WSA in the Breen Ranch area. Access will be from Breen Ranch. About five acres inside the WSA will be disturbed.

Required maintenance will be done on two spring developments, three miles of pipeline, and four miles of barbed wire fence for livestock grazing management. Maintenance would have a negligible effect on the wilderness values of naturalness and solitude in the 45,220 acres designated wilderness since the facilities already exist.

The suitable portion of the WSA, including cherrystem roads extending seventeen miles into the WSA, and twenty-five miles of ways would be closed to recreational ORV use. This action would eliminate approximately 500 visits of recreational ORV use that are estimated to occur in the area at present. This would improve the area's naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation slightly because of elimination of some surface disturbance. The wilderness experience would improve because visitors would not encounter or hear ORV users in the area.

The 9,600 acres not designated wilderness would be open for recreational ORV use, including ten miles of way. Recreational ORV use on this parcel would remain below 500 visits annually for the foreseeable future. This would reduce slightly the naturalness and opportunities for solitude on the 9,600 acres.

> Conclusion. On the 45,220 acres designated wilderness, naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude would improve slightly. The wilderness values of naturalness and solitude would be lost on 35 acres in the areas of mineral development. On the 9,600 acres not designated wilderness, there would be a slight reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitude.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

Wilderness designation would close 45,220 acres of the WSA to recreational ORV use. Recreational vehicle use of approximately 500 visits would be eliminated annually from the WSA. Public land that offers similar opportunities for recreational ORV use is located throughout the region. Therefore, recreational use foregone would be absorbed on surrounding public lands.

The 9,600 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness would remain open to ORVs. Recreational ORV use levels would increase but remain under 500 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

> Conclusion. Recreational ORV use would be foregone on the 45,220 acres designated wilderness and 500 visits would be foregone annually.
>
> On the 9,600 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness, recreational ORV use would increase.

Impacts on Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the 45,220 acres recommended as suitable for wilderness designation would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry and mineral leasing. Exploration would be eliminated. This includes 2,560 acres of high potential and 32,740 acres of moderate potential metallic minerals resources. It is anticipated one underground and two open pit precious metals mines would be developed.

Development of oil and gas and geothermal resources is unlikely because of the lack of leases, exploration, industry interest, the high costs associated with test wells, the area's inaccessibility and location outside the WSA of a known oil and gas province, and better potential for reserves in other areas.

All lands within the 9,600 acres recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation would remain open for mineral entry, leasing, and exploration. All potential mineral resources would be available for development. This includes 320 acres with high and 5,100 acres with moderate potential for metallic minerals. Development of 740 acres with moderate potential for oil and gas, and 740 acres with moderate potential for geothermal would be unlikely because higher potential exists in more accessible locations outside the WSA.

> Conclusion. No impacts to precious metals development would occur. Exploration would be foregone on 45,220 acres recommended suitable for wilderness designation.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

The entire WSA would continue to be managed for livestock grazing. The two spring developments and four miles of barbed wire fence would be maintained. No additional range developments are anticipated.

> Conclusion. There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and construction.

Impacts on Mule Deer Population

Wilderness designation on the 45,220 acres recommended suitable would have a significant beneficial effect on big game habitat management. A 14,640 acres of deer summer range, 21,120 acres of critical deer summer range, and 5,760 acres of deer winter range would be maintained in good condition as a result of closure to ORV use and mineral and energy exploration and development. Prohibition of mechanical manipulation of vegetation will result in a decline of approximately 4,000 acres of deer winter range from good to fair condition.

On the remaining 9,600 acres, due to the increase in ORV use and mineral and energy exploration and development, big game habitat is expected to decline. Mechanical manipulation of approximately 5,000 acres of vegetation may result in maintaining this area in good condition.

Conclusion. The overall impact of wilderness designation of 45,220 acres would be beneficial to big game habitat. Nondesignation of 9,600 acres would result in a reduction in mule deer population.

Proposed Action (No Wilderness)

Under the proposed action, the entire 64,360 acres of the Rawhide Mountain WSA would be recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to the development of mineral resources and the resulting impacts on wilderness values in the long term.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The immediate impact of this action would be negligible, since little development activity is anticipated in the first few years whether or not the area is designated wilderness.

Mineral exploration is expected to average five Notices of Intent (NOI) per year. Each NOI is expected to have a total disturbance of about four acres, including 1.5 miles of road and eight pads.

Some development of the 913 existing mining claims in the WSA is anticipated due to the high potential for metallic minerals. Wilderness values would be lost as a result of mineral development in the area between Midden Mountain and Twin Peaks. For the purpose of this analysis it is assumed that in the long term there would be two discoveries: (1) An underground mine on the border of the WSA at Tybo Canyon. About 15 acres inside the WSA would be disturbed with the mine, tailings, mill, and one mile of road; (2) An open pit mine on the border of the WSA in the Little Rawhide Mountain area. About 50 acres would be disturbed inside the WSA. The disturbed area would include exploration, mine, mill, and tailings.

The one mile mine access road would most likely protrude into the WSA from the northern boundary.

The mineral development activities would be obvious in the WSA's northern area. This is the portion of the WSA that is most likely to be used by the public. Therefore, the WSA would no longer appear natural to the average visitor.

Mineral development activities would adversely impact the wilderness value of solitude. Outstanding opportunities for solitude would be lost.

Recreational off-road vehicle use would have an adverse impact on solitude of the WSA. However, this impact is expected to be slight since ORV use is estimated to be less than 1,000 visits annually and is expected to remain below 1,500 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

Other recreation uses would increase slightly, but would remain at levels below 400 visits annually for the foreseeable future. This increase would not significantly impact opportunities for solitude.

Three miles of pipeline, four miles of fence, and a well are planned in the WSA. Grazing facility maintenance and construction actions would not affect wilderness values in the WSA.

Conclusion. The Rawhide Mountain WSA's wilderness values of size, naturalness, and outstanding opportunities for solitude would be lost.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

The WSA would be open to ORV use. Over the predictable future, six miles of mine exploration roads would be constructed within the WSA making the central portion of the WSA more accessible to ORV use. Recreational ORV use would remain below the 1,500 visits annually over the foreseeable future.

Conclusion. Recreational ORV use would remain below 1,500 visits annually. There would be no impact on recreational ORV use.

Impacts on Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the WSA would remain open for mineral entry and mineral leasing. All potential mineral resources would be available for development and exploration. This includes 6,240 acres of high and 8,480 acres of moderate potential for occurrence of metallic minerals and 13,760 acres of moderate potential for oil and gas and 7,360 acres for moderate geothermal potential. An underground and an open pit mine for precious minerals is expected because of the high potential for economic deposits.

Development of oil and gas is unlikely because of the lack of leases, exploration, industry interest, the high costs associated with test wells, the area's inaccessibility and location outside for a known oil and gas province, and better potential for reserves in other areas.

Conclusion. There would be no impact to development or exploration of mineral resources.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

The existing spring development would be maintained and three miles of pipeline, four miles of fence, and a well planned within the WSA would be installed. The WSA will continue to be managed for livestock grazing.

Conclusion. There would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance or construction in the Rawhide Mountain WSA.

Adverse Impacts Which Cannot be Avoided

The only unavoidable adverse impacts would be those associated with mineral exploration and development. Some of these impacts may be reduced by careful examination and mitigating stipulations in approved Notices of Intent and Plans of Operation. All other impacts would be minor in nature and would tend to balance out each other.

Relationship Between Local Short-Term Uses of Man's Environment and the Maintenance and Enhancement of Long-Term Productivity

If the WSA is not designated wilderness, all present uses would continue. Off-road vehicle use and mining exploration and development would reduce the wilderness values in the foreseeable future.

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources

Mining exploration and development would create an irreversible commitment of the wilderness resource in all or part of this WSA if not designated as wilderness.

Alternative A (All Wilderness)

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the entire 64,360 acres of public land in the Rawhide Mountain WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to the mineral withdrawal and ORV closure in designated wilderness, the resulting effects on mineral development and recreational ORV use, and the protection of wilderness values.

Impacts on Wilderness Values.

Wilderness values of size, naturalness, opportunities for solitude, and primitive and unconfined recreation, and the supplemental features of diversity of wildlife, vegetation, and topography would be retained in most of the WSA. Wilderness designation would withdraw the WSA from mineral entry and development.

Some development of the 913 existing mining claims in the WSA is anticipated. At least two claims are expected to meet the criteria for valid discovery at the time of designation. Wilderness values would be lost as a result of mineral development in the area between Midden Mountain and Twin Peaks. For the purpose of this analysis it is assumed that in the long term there would be two discoveries: (1) An underground mine on the border of the WSA at Tybo Canyon. About 15 acres inside the WSA will be disturbed with the mine, tailings, mill, and one mile of road; (2) An open pit mine on the border of the WSA in the Little Rawhide Mountain area. About 50 acres will be disturbed inside the WSA. The disturbed area will include exploration, mine, mill, and tailings.

Wilderness designation would close the entire 64,360 acre Rawhide Mountain WSA to all forms of recreational ORV use. Although encounters between ORV users and others are infrequent at the current use levels, the elimination of ORV use would enhance opportunities for solitude. The improvement in the area's naturalness as a result of ORV closure would be marginal since the existing level of use is quite low.

Livestock grazing and range management actions would not affect wilderness values in the WSA because the well will not be installed. The fence will blend with the landscape and maintenance activities will not change.

Three miles of pipeline would be completed in the WSA. This would have a negligible effect on the area's naturalness.

> Conclusion. Wilderness values would be slightly enhanced on all 64,360 acres of the Rawhide Mountain WSA. The wilderness values of naturalness and solitude would be lost in the areas of mineral development.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

Wilderness designation would close the entire 64,360 acre Rawhide Mountain WSA to all forms of recreational ORV use. Recreation ORV use of approximately 1,000 visits would be eliminated annually from the WSA. Public land that offers similar or superior opportunities for recreational ORV use is located throughout the region. Therefore, recreational ORV use foregone in the WSA would be absorbed on surrounding public lands.

> Conclusion. Recreational ORV use of 1,000 visits would be foregone annually. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.

Impacts on Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the Rawhide Mountain WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry and mineral leasing and exploration. This includes 13,760 acres of moderate potential for oil and gas and 7,360 acres with moderate potential for geothermal resources.

Development of oil and gas is unlikely because of the lack of leases, exploration, industry interest, the high costs associated with test wells, the area's inaccessibility and location outside of a known oil and gas province, and better potential for reserves in other areas.

It is assumed that one underground and one open pit mine located on claims established prior to designation would have production sufficient to support commercial development of metallic mineral resources. No other mineral development is expected in the WSA.

> Conclusion. No impact to precious metals resource development would occur. Exploration would be foregone on 64,360 acres.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

The existing spring development would be maintained. The well would not be developed. Access to water for cattle would be affected. Therefore, there would be some impact on grazing facility maintenance or construction.

Conclusion. A proposed well could not be developed in the WSA.

Alternative B (Partial Wilderness)

About 41,960 acres of the Rawhide Mountain WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation and 22,400 acres would be recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to the protection of wilderness values through wilderness designation and the resulting increases in naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

All wilderness values on the 41,960 acres recommended suitable for wilderness designation would receive the special legislative protection provided by wilderness designation. The areas of the most spectacular scenery and outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation and naturalness would be retained.

Twelve miles of cherrystem roads would be closed. The spring development would be maintained. Three miles of pipeline would be completed in the WSA. This would have a negligible short term effect on the area's naturalness.

Cherrystem roads extending twelve miles into the WSA and seventeen miles of ways would be closed to recreational ORV use. This action would eliminate approximately 800 visits of recreational ORV use that are estimated to occur in the area at present. This would improve the area's naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation slightly because of the near elimination of surface disturbance and because visitors would not encounter or hear ORV users in the area.

The 22,400 acres not designated wilderness would be open for recreational ORV use. Thirteen miles of way would be open for vehicle use. Recreational ORV use on this parcel would remain below 1,000 visits annually for the foreseeable future. This would reduce slightly the naturalness and opportunities for solitude on the 22,400 acres. A well and four miles of fence would be constructed.

Some development of the 913 existing mining claims in the WSA is anticipated. At least two claims are expected to meet the criteria for valid discovery at the time of designation. Wilderness values would be lost as a result of mineral development in the area between Midden Mountain and Twin Peaks. For the purpose of this analysis it is assumed that in the long term there would be two discoveries: (1) An underground mine on the border of the WSA at Tybo Canyon. About 15 acres inside the WSA will be disturbed with the mine, tailings, mill, and one mile of road; (2) An open pit mine on the border of the WSA in the Little Rawhide Mountain area. About 50 acres will be disturbed inside the WSA. The disturbed area will include exploration, mine, mill, and tailings.

Conclusion. On the 41,960 acres designated wilderness, the area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude would improve slightly. The wilderness values of naturalness and solitude would be lost in the areas of mineral development. On the 22,400 acres not designated wilderness, there would be a slight reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitude.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

Wilderness designation would close 41,960 acres of the WSA to recreational ORV use. Recreational vehicle use of approximately 800 visits would be eliminated annually from the WSA. Public land that offers similar opportunities for recreational ORV use is located throughout the region. Therefore, recreational use foregone would be absorbed on surrounding public lands.

The 22,400 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness would remain open to the ORVs. Recreational ORV use levels would increase but remain under 1,000 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

Conclusion. Recreational ORV use would be foregone on the 41,960 acres designated wilderness and 800 visits would be foregone annually.

On the 22,400 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness, recreational ORV use would continue to increase, but would not exceed 1,000 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

Impacts on Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the 41,960 acres recommended as suitable for wilderness designation would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry and mineral leasing and exploration. This includes 6,240 acres of high potential and 7,200 acres of moderate potential for metallic minerals. It is anticipated an underground and an open pit precious metals mines located on claims established prior to designation would be developed.

All lands within the 22,400 acres recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation would remain open for mineral entry and leasing. All potential mineral resources would be available for development. This includes 1,280 acres of moderate potential for metallic minerals, 13,760 acres of moderate potential for oil and gas, and 7,360 acres of moderate potential for geothermal resources. Development of these resources is unlikely because higher potential exists in more accessible locations outside the WSA.

Conclusion. No impact to development of precious metals would occur. Exploration would be foregone on 41,960 acres recommended suitable for wilderness designation.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

The Rawhide Mountain WSA will continue to be managed for livestock grazing. All grazing facilities could be maintained, this includes three miles of pipeline within the suitable area and a well and four miles of fence in the area recommended nonsuitable.

Conclusion. There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and construction.

MOREY WSA (NV-060-191)

Proposed Action (Partial Wilderness)

Under the Proposed Action, 14,560 acres of the Morey WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation and 5,560 acres would be recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to the protection of wilderness values through wilderness designation and the resulting increases in naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

All wilderness values on the 14,560 acres recommended suitable for wilderness designation would receive the special legislative protection provided by wilderness designation. The areas of the most spectacular scenery and outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation and naturalness would be retained.

Required maintenance would be provided for the existing two miles of pipeline for livestock grazing management. Approximately 150 visits of recreational ORV use are estimated to occur in the area at present.

One mile of road would be open to recreational ORV use. Approximately 150 visits of recreational ORV use are estimated to occur in the area at present. This would slightly reduce the area's naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation because visitors might encounter or hear ORV users in the area.

The 5,560 acres not designated wilderness would be open for recreational ORV use. A way one mile long would be open for vehicle use. Recreational ORV use on this parcel would remain below 50 visits annually for the foreseeable future. This would reduce slightly the naturalness and opportunities for solitude on the 5,560 acres.

Development and exploration of mineral resources would not affect wilderness values, since no mineral development is anticipated.

The protected area has small stands of Bristlecone pine, the oldest known living things. Few areas are found in the United States. Included also are bighorn sheep recently reintroduced into the Morey WSA. An excellent fishable stream is located in South Sixmile Canyon. This stream has a naturally reproducing population of brook trout.

Approximately 1,000 acres of mechanical thinning would be completed in the 5,560 acres recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

The Morey Study area also lies within an area proposed as a National Natural Landmark due to its representation of the Great Basin ecosystem. There are also valuable cultural resource sites within the study area. A rock wall alignment and hunting blind are found within the WSA, as well as charcoal kilns built in the 1870s for smelting furnaces in the near mining districts.

Conclusion. On the 14,560 acres designated wilderness, wilderness values of the Bristlecone pine, bighorn sheep habitat, South Sixmile Canyon and the proposed National Natural Landmark areas would be protected. There would be a slight reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitude because of continued recreational ORV use.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

Wilderness designation would close 14,560 acres of the WSA to recreational ORV use. Recreational vehicle use of approximately 150 visits would be eliminated annually from the WSA. The one mile of road within the designated area would remain open to ORV use.

The 5,560 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness would remain open to ORVs. Recreational ORV use levels would increase but remain under 50 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

Conclusion. Recreational ORV use of 150 visits annually would be foregone on the 14,560 acres designated wilderness. The one mile of road within the designated area would remain open.

On the 5,560 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness, recreational ORV use would continue to increase, but would not exceed 50 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

Impacts on Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the 14,560 acres recommended as suitable for wilderness designation would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry and mineral leasing. This includes 3,520 acres with a moderate potential for metallic minerals. Although this portion of the WSA has 162 existing mining claims, it is anticipated that none of these claims would meet the validity requirement, therefore none of those claims would be developed. Since no new mining claims could be established after wilderness designation the potential for developing a small precious metals mine in this part of the WSA would be foregone.

All lands within the 5,560 acres recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation would remain open for mineral entry and leasing. All potential mineral resources would be available for development. This includes 640 acres of moderate potential for metallic minerals and 5,120 acres of moderate potential for oil and gas and geothermal resources. Development of these resources is unlikely because higher potential exists in more accessible locations outside the WSA.

Conclusion. Exploration and development of one small precious metals mine would be foregone.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

The Morey WSA would continue to be managed for livestock grazing. Two miles of pipeline would be maintain. No other grazing facilities are expected in the foreseeable future.

Conclusion. There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and construction. All anticipated facilities have been completed and maintenance will be performed.

Impacts on Mule Deer Population

Wilderness designation on the 14,560 acres recommended suitable would have a significant beneficial effect on mule deer population. Fourteen thousand two hundred acres of deer summer range, 6,720 acres of deer winter range, and 5,760 acres of critical deer winter range would be maintained in good condition as a result of closure to ORV use and mineral and energy exploration and development. Prohibiting mechanical manipulation of vegetation would result in a decline of approximately 5,620 acres of deer winter range and mule deer population.

On the remaining 5,560 acres, due to the increase in ORV use and mineral and energy exploration and development, the mule deer population is expected to decline. Mechanical manipulation of approximately 2,000 acres of vegetation may result in maintaining some of this area in good condition.

Conclusion. The overall impact of wilderness designation of 14,560 acres would be beneficial to mule deer population. Nondesignation of 5,560 acres would result in a reduction in mule deer population.

Adverse Impacts Which Cannot be Avoided

On the 14,560 acres designate wilderness, the only unavoidable adverse impacts would be the anticipated precious metal mines, or others with valid discoveries.

On the 5,560 acres designated nonwilderness, the unavoidable adverse impacts would be those associated with mineral exploration and development. Some of these impacts may be reduced by careful examination and mitigation stipulations in the approved Notices of Intent and Plans of Operation.

Relationship Between Local Short-Term Uses of Man's Environment and Maintenance and Enhancement of Long-Term Productivity

On the 14,560 acres designated wilderness, the wilderness values would be protected, except in areas of valid discoveries.

On the 5,560 acres not designated wilderness, all present uses would continue. Off-road vehicle use and mining exploration and developments would reduce the wilderness values.

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

On the 14,560 acres designated wilderness, no irreversible or irretrievable commitment of wilderness values is expected, except in areas of valid discoveries.

On the 5,560 acres designated nonwilderness, mining exploration and development would create an irreversible commitment of wilderness resources.

Alternative A (All Wilderness)

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the entire 20,120 acres of Morey WSA would be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to the protection of wilderness values through wilderness designation and the resulting increases in naturalness, opportunities for solitude, and primitive and unconfined recreation.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Two miles of cherrystem roads would be closed. Required maintenance would be provided for the existing two miles of pipeline, and for livestock grazing management. Approximately 2,000 acres of mechanical thinning would be foregone.

One cherrystem road extending two miles into the WSA and two miles of ways would be closed to recreational ORV use. This action would eliminate approximately 200 visits of recreational ORV use that are estimated to occur in the area at present. This would improve the area's naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation slightly because of the near elimination of surface disturbance and because visitors would not encounter or hear ORV users in the area.

The wilderness values of naturalness, solitude and primitive recreation, and the supplemental features of outstanding sightseeing in a diverse geologic area would be maintained on 20,120 acres of the WSA. The Bristlecone pine, bighorn sheep habitat, South Sixmile Canyon and the proposed National Natural Landmark areas would be protected.

Conclusion. On 20,120 acres of the WSA, there would be a slight improvement of the area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude.

Impacts on Recreational Off-road Vehicle Use

Wilderness designation would close the 20,120 acres of the WSA to recreational ORV use. Recreation ORV use of approximately 200 visits would be eliminated annually from the WSA. Public land that offers similar opportunities for recreational ORV use is located throughout the region. Therefore, recreational ORV use foregone in the WSA would be absorbed on surrounding public lands.

Conclusion. Recreational ORV use of 200 visits annually would be foregone on the 20,120 acres designated wilderness.

Impacts on Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the Morey WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry and mineral leasing. This includes 5,120 acres with moderate potential for oil and gas resources, 5,120 acres with moderate potential for geothermal resources, and 4,160 acres with moderate potential for metallic minerals. Although the WSA has existing mining claims, it is anticipated that none of these claims would meet the validity requirement, therefore none of these claims would be developed. Since no new mining claims could be established after wilderness designation, the potential for developing a small precious metals mine in this WSA would be foregone.

Conclusion. Exploration and development of one small precious metals mine would be foregone.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

The Morey WSA would continue to be managed for livestock grazing. Two miles of pipeline would be maintained. No additional grazing facilities are anticipated.

Conclusion. There would be no impacts on grazing facility maintenance or construction.

Impacts on Mule Deer Population

Wilderness designation would have a significant beneficial effect on mule deer population. About 1,920 acres of deer summer range, 8,320 acres of critical deer winter range, 8,000 acres of deer winter range would be maintained in good condition as a result of closure of the WSA to ORV use and mineral development. Prohibiting mechanical manipulation of vegetation would result in the decline of approximately 2,000 acres of deer winter range.

Conclusion. The overall impact of wilderness designation would be a beneficial effect on mule deer population. Mechanical thinning on 2,000 acres of mule deer habitat would be foregone.

Alternative B (Partial Wilderness)

Under this alternative, actions include combining the Morey WSA with the Fandango WSA by closing the South Sixmile Road, adjusting boundaries, and closing and rehabilitating cherrystem roads.

A portion of the Fandango WSA, 31,740 acres, would be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation, including 14,560 acres of the Morey WSA added to the original WSA. The remaining 14,760 acres, located along the periphery of the WSAs, would be recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to the development of mineral resources and the resulting impacts on wilderness values in the long-term.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

In this alternative, 46,300 acres of the Fandango and Morey WSAs would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation and 14,760 acres would be recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation. All wilderness values on the 46,300 acres recommended suitable for wilderness designation would receive the special legislative protection provided by wilderness designation. The areas of the most spectacular scenery and outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation and naturalness would be retained.

The protected area has small stands of Bristlecone pine, the oldest known living things. Few areas are found in the United States. Included also are bighorn sheep recently reintroduced into the Morey WSA. An excellent fishable stream is located in South Sixmile Canyon. This stream has a naturally reproducing population of brook trout.

The Wilderness Study area also lies within an area proposed as a National Natural Landmark due to its representation of the Great Basin ecosystem. There are also valuable cultural resource sites within the study area. A rock wall alignment and hunting blind are found within the WSA, as well as charcoal kilns built in the 1870s for smelting furnaces at near mining district.

Twelve miles of cherrystem roads and the South Sixmile road would be closed and rehabilitated. Required maintenance would be provided for the existing five spring developments, seven miles of pipeline, and two miles of barbed wire fence and for livestock grazing management. Approximately 3,500 acres of mechanical thinning would be foregone.

The entire Fandango and Morey WSAs including cherrystem roads extending twelve miles into the WSA and fourteen miles of ways would be closed to recreational ORV use. This action would eliminate approximately 500 visits of recreational ORV use that are estimated to occur in the area at present. This would improve the area's naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation slightly because of near elimination of surface disturbance and because visitors would not encounter or hear ORV users in the area.

The 14,760 acres not designated wilderness would be open for recreational ORV use. Three miles of ways would be open for vehicle use. Recreational ORV use on this parcel would remain below 1,000 visits annually for the foreseeable future. This would reduce slightly the naturalness and opportunities for solitude on the 14,760 acres.

Exploration and development of mineral resources would not affect wilderness values, since mineral development would not be allowed.

All wilderness values would be maintained on all 46,300 acres of both the WSAs. This includes the area of spectacular scenery, outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation, and naturalness. The Bristlecone pine, bighorn sheep habitat, South Sixmile Canyon and the proposed National Natural Landmark areas would be protected.

> Conclusion. On the 46,300 acres designated wilderness, the area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude would improve slightly. The Bristlecone pine, bighorn sheep habitat, South Sixmile Canyon and the proposed National Natural Landmark areas would be protected. On the 14,760 acres not designated wilderness, there would be a slight reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitude.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

Wilderness designation would close 46,300 acres of the WSA to recreational ORV use. Recreational vehicle use of approximately 500 visits would be eliminated annually from the WSA. Public land that offers similar opportunities for recreational ORV use is located throughout the region. Therefore, recreational use foregone would be absorbed on surrounding public lands.

The 14,760 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness would remain open to ORVs. Recreational ORV use levels would increase but remain under 1,000 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

> Conclusion. Recreational ORV use would be foregone on the 46,300 acres designated wilderness and 500 visits would be foregone annually.
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> On the 14,760 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness, recreational ORV use would continue to increase, but would not exceed 1,000 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

Impacts on Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the 46,300 acres recommended as suitable for wilderness designation would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry and mineral leasing. This includes 3,520 acres of moderate potential for metallic minerals. Although this portion of the WSAs has existing mining claims, it is anticipated that none of these claims would meet the validity requirement, therefore none of these claims would be developed. Since no new mining claims could be established after wilderness designation, the potential for developing a small precious metals mine in these WSAs would be foregone.

All lands within the 14,760 acres recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation would remain open for mineral entry and leasing. All potential mineral resources would be available for development. This includes 5,120 acres with a moderate potential for oil and gas resources, 5,120 acres with moderate potential for geothermal resources, and 640 acres with moderate potential for metallic minerals. Development of these resources is unlikely because higher potential exists in more accessible locations outside the WSA.

Conclusion. Exploration and development of a small precious metals mine would be foregone.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

Both the Morey and Fandango WSAs would be managed for livestock grazing. Five spring developments, seven miles of pipeline, and two miles of barbed wire fence would be maintained. One mile of pipeline would be completed. Approximately 3,500 acres of prescribed burning would be completed for improvement of livestock grazing forage.

Conclusion. There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and construction.

Impacts on Mule Deer Population

Over the long term, wilderness designation on the 46,300 acres recommended suitable would have a significant beneficial effect on mule deer population. Mechanical manipulation of 3,500 acres of pinyon-juniper encroachment would be foregone. This would be offset by ORV closures and lack of mineral and energy exploration and development. About 36,260 acres of deer summer range, 14,220 acres of deer winter range, and 5,760 acres of critical deer winter range would be maintained in good condition as a result of closure to ORV use and mineral and energy exploration and development.

Conclusion. The overall impact of wilderness designation of 46,300 acres would be beneficial to mule deer population. Nondesignation of 14,760 acres would result in a reduction in mule deer population in those areas.

Alternative C (No Wilderness)

Under this Alternative, the 20,120 acres Morey WSA would be recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to ORV use and the resulting reduction in naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreations.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The short-term impact of this action would be negligible, since little development activity is anticipated in the short-term whether or not the area is designated wilderness.

It is anticipated there will be one Notice of Intent per year in the vicinity of the old town of Morey. This exploration will probably disturb about 2.6 acres per year, including one mile of road and five drill pads.

Some development of the 162 existing mining claims in the WSA is anticipated due to the moderate potential for precious metals. Over time, wilderness values would be lost as a result of one mineral development in the northeastern part of the WSA. For the purpose of this analysis it is assumed that in the foreseeable future there would be one discovery for mineral resources in this WSA. An estimated 25 acres of surface disturbance including one mile of road would be associated with developing this claim. The mineral development activities would include those associated with road, tailings ponds, mine, and mill in the vicinity of the development. No other development is anticipated in the WSA.

Two miles of cherrystem roads would receive vehicular use to provide required maintenance for two miles of pipeline for livestock grazing management. This vehicle use would slightly reduce the area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude on 20,120 acres of the WSA. Approximately 2,000 acres of prescribed burning would be accomplished. This would have a negligible effect on the area's naturalness since fire would be reintroduced into a fire dependent ecosystem.

In the projected future, increasing recreational ORV use is expected to have a slight adverse effect on wilderness values. Recreational ORV use would increase slightly but would remain below 300 visits annually. Three cherrystem roads, with a total length of two miles, extending into the WSA from the northern and western boundaries and two miles of ways would be maintained for vehicle use. Due to low use, creation of new trails or ways for recreational ORV use is not anticipated. Recreational ORV use would also lower the opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude slightly because visitors would see and hear ORVs in the area. The stands of Bristlecone pine, because of the accessability to the location should not be affected. Bighorn sheep habitat would be reduced by the increase in ORV use, hunter use, and human activities in the area. The naturalness and opportunities for solitude would be reduced in South Sixmile Canyon because of an increase in ORV use and mineral exploration.

Conclusion. On 20,120 acres of the WSA, the area's naturalness and opportunities for solitude would be lost in the northeastern part of the WSA due to increasing recreational ORV use and mineral development.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

The WSA would be open to ORVs. Recreational ORV use levels would increase but remain under 300 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

Conclusion. There would be no impact on recreational ORV use.

Impacts on Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the Morey WSA would remain open for mineral entry and mineral leasing. All potential mineral resources would be available for development. This includes 4,160 acres with moderate potential for metallic minerals, 5,120 acres with moderate potential for oil and gas resources, and 5,120 acres with moderate potential for geothermal resources.

Some development of the 162 existing mining claims in the WSA is anticipated due to the moderate potential for precious metals. Over time, wilderness values would be lost as a result of mineral development in the northeastern part of the WSA. For the purpose of this analysis it is assumed that in the foreseeable future there would be one discovery for mineral resources in this WSA. An estimated 25 acres of surface disturbance including one mile of road would be associated with developing this claim. The mineral development activities would include those associated with road, tailings ponds, mine, and mill in the vicinity of the development. No other development is anticipated in the WSA.

Conclusion. There would be no impact to development of mineral resources.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

The Morey WSA would continue to be managed for livestock grazing. Two miles of pipeline within the WSA would be maintained for livestock management purposes. No additional range developments would be constructed in the WSA.

Conclusion. There would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance and construction.

Impacts on Mule Deer Population

Due to the increase in ORV use and mineral and energy exploration and development, a reduction of mule deer population is expected, however, this would be offset by mechanical thinning of pinyon and juniper encroachment on 2,000 acres of wildlife habitat to allow for browse re-establishment.

Conclusion. There would be no impact to mule deer populations overall.

Proposed Action (Partial Wilderness)

Under the Proposed Action, 31,740 acres of the Fandango WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation and 9,200 acres would be recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to the protection of wilderness values through wilderness designation and the resulting increases in naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

In this alternative 31,740 acres of the Fandango WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation and 9,200 acres would be recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation. All wilderness values on the 31,740 acres recommended suitable for wilderness designation would receive the special legislative protection provided by wilderness designation. The areas of the most spectacular scenery and outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation and naturalness would be retained.

Five miles of cherrystem roads would be open. Required maintenance would be provided for the existing five spring developments, five miles of pipeline, and two miles of barbed wire fence for livestock grazing management. Approximately 1,500 acres of prescribed burning would be accomplished. This would have a negligible effect on the WSA's naturalness since fire would be reintroduced into a fire dependent ecosystem. One mile of pipeline would be completed in the WSA. This would have a negligible short-term effect on the area's naturalness in the immediate vicinity of the pipeline because of vegetation disturbance. Within three years of construction, vegetation would become re-established so that the disturbance would be substantially unnoticeable.

The entire WSA would be closed to ORV use. Cherrystem roads extending eleven miles into the WSA and ten miles of ways would be open to recreational ORV use. Approximately 500 visits of recreational ORV use are estimated to occur in the area at present. This would reduce slightly the area's naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation, because visitors might encounter or hear ORV users in the area.

The 9,200 acres not designated wilderness would be open for recreational ORV use. Five miles of ways would be open for vehicle use. Recreational ORV use on this parcel would remain below 1,000 visits annually for the foreseeable future. This would reduce slightly the naturalness and opportunities for solitude on the 9,200 acres.

Exploration and development of mineral resources would not affect wilderness values, since none is expected.

All wilderness values would be maintained on all 31,740 acres of the WSA. This includes the area of spectacular scenery, outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation, and naturalness.

> Conclusion. On the 31,740 acres designated wilderness, all wilderness values would be maintained. The area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude would reduce slightly because of approximately 500 visits of recreational ORV use. On the 9,200 acres not designated wilderness, there would be a slight reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitude because of continued recreational ORV use.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

The 11 miles of cherrystem roads and 10 miles of way would remain open for ORV use. Wilderness designation would close 31,740 acres of the WSA to recreational ORV use. Recreational vehicle use of approximately 500 visits would not be eliminated annually from the WSA.

The 9,200 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness would remain open to ORVs. Recreational ORV use levels would increase but remain under 200 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

> Conclusion. Recreational ORV use would continue on the 11 miles of cherrystem roads and 10 miles of ways that would remain open on the 31,740 acres designated wilderness and 500 visits would be expected annually.
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> On the 9,200 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness, recreational ORV use would continue to increase, but would not exceed 200 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

Impacts on Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the 31,740 acres recommended as suitable for wilderness designation would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry and mineral leasing. There are no known or potential minerals or energy resources in this area.

All lands within the 9,200 acres recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation would remain open for mineral entry and leasing. All potential mineral resources would be available for development. This includes 8,640 acres with a moderate potential for oil and gas resources and 480 acres with a moderate potential for geothermal resources. Development of these resources is unlikely because higher potential exists in more accessible locations outside the WSA.

Conclusion. No impact to minerals exploration or development would occur.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

The Fandango WSA would continue to be managed for livestock grazing. The five spring developments, five miles of pipeline, and two miles of barbed wire fence would be maintained. One mile of pipeline planned in the WSA would be completed.

Conclusion. There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and construction.

Impacts on Mule Deer Population

Over the foreseeable future, wilderness designation on the 31,740 acres recommended suitable would have a significant beneficial effect on the mule deer population. About 22,000 acres of deer summer range, and 7,500 acres of deer winter range would be maintained in good condition as a result of closure to ORV use and mineral and energy exploration and development. Prohibiting of mechanical manipulation of vegetation will result in a decline of approximately 1,500 acres of deer winter range.

On the remaining 9,200 acres, due to the increase in ORV use and mineral and energy exploration and development, mule deer populations are expected to decline.

Conclusion. The overall impact of wilderness designation of 31,740 acres would be beneficial to mule deer populations. Nondesignation of 9,200 acres would result in a reduction in mule deer population.

Adverse Impacts Which Cannot Be Avoided

On the 31,740 acres designated wilderness, the only unavoidable adverse impacts would be from development of mines with valid discoveries.

On the 9,200 acres designated nonwilderness, the unavoidable adverse impacts would be those associated with mineral exploration and development. Some of these impacts may be reduced by careful examination and mitigation stipulations in the approved Notices of Intent and Plans of Operation.

Relationship Between Local Short-Term Uses of Man's Environment and Maintenance and Enhancement of Long-Term Productivity

On the 31,740 acres designated wilderness, the wilderness values would be protected, except in areas of valid discoveries.

On the 9,200 acres not designated wilderness, all present uses would continue. ORV use and mining exploration and developments would reduce the wilderness values.

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

On the 31,740 acres designated wilderness, no irreversible or irretrievable commitment of wilderness values is expected, except in areas of valid discoveries.

On the 9,200 acres designated nonwilderness, mining exploration and development would create an irreversible commitment of wilderness resources.

Alternative A (All Wilderness)

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the entire 40,940 acres of the Fandango WSA would be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to the protection of wilderness values through wilderness designation and resulting increases in naturalness, opportunities for solitude, and primitive and unconfined recreation.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Five miles of cherrystem roads would be closed. Required maintenance would be provided for the existing five spring developments, five miles of pipeline, and two miles of barbed wire fence and for livestock grazing management. In the Cow Canyon portion of the WSA where most of the facilities are concentrated, there would be a slight reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitude because the maintenance would be concentrated in a relatively small area of 1,900 acres. One mile of pipeline would be completed in the WSA. This would have a negligible effect on the area's naturalness in the immediate vicinity of the pipeline because of vegetation disturbance. Within three years of construction vegetation would become re-established so that the disturbance would be substantially unnoticeable.

The Fandango WSA lies within the Hot Creek Range which has been nominated for designation as a National Natural Landmark due to the existence of all major Great Basin ecosystems within the area. Historical sites, charcoal kilns dating back to the 1870s, have been located within the Fandango WSA.

Five cherrystem roads extending eleven miles into the WSA, and ten miles of ways would be closed to recreational ORV use. This action would eliminate approximately 700 visits of recreational ORV use that are estimated to occur in the area at present. This would improve the area's naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation slightly because of the near elimination of surface disturbance and because visitors would not encounter or hear ORV users in the area.

The wilderness values of naturalness, solitude, and primitive recreation, and the supplemental features of outstanding sightseeing in a diverse geologic area would be maintained on 40,940 acres of the WSA.

Conclusion. There would be a slight improvement of the area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude. There would be a slight decrease in the area's naturalness opportunities for solitude on 1,900 acres in the Cow Canyon.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

Wilderness designation would close the 40,940 acre WSA to recreational ORV use. Recreational ORV use of approximately 700 visits would be eliminated annually from the WSA. Public land that offers similar opportunities for recreational ORV use is located throughout the region. Therefore, recreational ORV use foregone in the WSA would be absorbed on surrounding public lands.

Conclusion. Recreational ORV use would be foregone on the 40,940 acres designated wilderness and 700 visits would be foregone annually.

Impacts on Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the Fandango WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry and mineral leasing. There are no known or suspected mineral resources in this WSA. This includes 8,640 acres with moderate potential for oil and gas resources and 480 acres with moderate potential for geothermal resources. There are no known mineral resources in this WSA.

Conclusion. No impact to mineral exploration or development would occur.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

The Fandango WSA would continue to be managed for livestock grazing. Two miles of fence, five miles of pipeline and five spring developments would be maintained. One mile of pipeline would be completed.

Conclusion. There would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance or construction.

Impacts on Mule Deer Population

Over the long term, wilderness designation on the 40,940 acres would have a beneficial effect on mule deer population. Although 1,500 acres of mechanical thinning would be foregone, this would be offset by the reduction of ORV use and mineral and energy exploration.

Conclusion. The overall impact of wilderness designation would be beneficial to mule deer population.

Alternative B (Partial Wilderness)

Under this alternative, actions include combining the Morey WSA with the Fandango WSA by closing the South Sixmile Road, adjusting boundaries, and closing and rehabilitating cherrystem roads.

A portion of the Fandango WSa, 31,740 acres, would be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation, including 14,560 acres of the Morey WSA added to the original WSA for a total of 46,300. The remaining 14,760 acres, located along the periphery of the WSAs, would be recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to the development of mineral resources and the resulting impacts on wilderness values in the long-term.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

In this alternative, 46,300 acres of the Fandango and Morey WSAs would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation and 14,760 acres would be recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation. All wilderness values on the 46,300 acres recommended suitable for wilderness designation would receive the special legislative protection provided by wilderness designation. The areas of the most spectacular scenery and outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation and naturalness would be retained.

The protected area has small stands of Bristlecone pine, the oldest known living things. Few areas are found in the United States. Included also are bighorn sheep recently reintroduced into the Morey WSA. An excellent fishable stream is located in South Sixmile Canyon. This stream has a naturally reproducing population of brook trout.

The Wilderness Study Area also lies within an area proposed as a National Natural Landmark due to its representation of the Great Basin ecosystem. There are also valuable cultural resource site within the study area. A rock wall alignment and hunting blind are found within the WSA, as well as charcoal kilns built in the 1870s to provide charcoal for smelting furnaces at near mining districts.

Twelve miles of cherrystem roads and the South Sixmile road would be closed and rehabilitated. Required maintenance would be provided for the existing five spring developments, seven miles of pipeline, and two miles of barbed wire fence for livestock grazing management. Approximately 3,500 acres of prescribed burning would be accomplished. This would have a negligible effect on the WSA's natualness since fire would be reintroduced into a fire dependent ecosystem. One mile of pipeline would be completed in the WSA. This would have a negligible effect on the area's naturalness in the immediate vicinity of the pipeline because of vegetation disturbance. Within three years of construction, vegetation would become re-established so that the disturbance would be substantially unnoticeable.

The entire Fandango and Morey WSAs, including cherrystem roads extending twelve miles into the WSA and fourteen miles of ways would be closed to recreational ORV use. This action would eliminate approximately 500 visits of recreational ORV use that are estimated to occur in the area at present. This would improve the area's naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation slightly because of near elimination of surface disturbance and because visitors would not encounter or hear ORV users in the area.

The 14,760 acres not designated wilderness would be open for recreation ORV use. Three miles of ways would be open for vehicle use. Recreational ORV use on this parcel would remain below 1,000 visits annually for the foreseeable future. This would reduce slightly the naturalness and opportunities for solitude on the 14,760 acres.

Development of mineral resources would not affect wilderness values, since no mineral development is anticipated.

All wilderness values would be maintained on all 46,300 acres of both the WSAs. This includes the area of spectacular scenery, outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation, and naturalness. The Bristlecone pine, bighorn sheep habitat, South Sixmile Canyon and the proposed National Natural Landmark areas would be protected.

Conclusion. On the 46,300 acres designated wilderness, all wilderness values would be maintained. The area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude would improve slightly. The Bristlecone pine, bighorn sheep habitat, South Sixmile Canyon and the proposed National Natural Landmark areas would be protected. On the 14,760 acres not designated wilderness, there would be a slight reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitude because of increasing recreational ORV use.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

Wilderness designation would close 46,300 acres of the WSA to recreational ORV use. Recreational vehicle use of approximately 500 visits would be eliminated annually from the WSA. Public land that offers similar opportunities for recreational ORV use is located throughout the region. Therefore, recreational use foregone would be absorbed on surrounding public lands.

The 14,760 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness would remain open to ORVs. Recreational ORV use levels would increase but remain under 1,000 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

> Conclusion. Recreational ORV use would be foregone on the 46,300 acres designated wilderness and 500 visits would be foregone annually. The impacts of shifting this use to other public lands would be negligible.
>
> On the 14,760 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness, recreational ORV use would continue to increase, but would not exceed 1,000 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

Impacts on Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the 46,300 acres recommended as suitable for wilderness designation would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry and mineral leasing. This includes 3,520 acres of moderate potential for metallic minerals.

Although this portion of the WSAs has existing mining claims, it is anticipated that none of these claims would meet the validity requirement, therefore none of these claims would be developed. Since no new mining claims could be established after wilderness designation, the potential for developing a small precious metals mine in these WSAs would be foregone.

All lands within the 14,760 acres recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation would remain open for mineral entry and leasing. All potential mineral resources would be available for development. This includes 5,120 acres with a moderate potential for oil and gas resources, 5,120 acres with moderate potential for geothermal resource, and 640 acres with moderate potential for metallic minerals. Development of these resources is unlikely because higher potential exists in more accessible locations.

> Conclusion. Development of one small precious metals mine would be foregone.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

Both the Morey and Fandango WSAs would be managed for livestock grazing. Five spring developments, seven miles of pipelines, and two miles of barbed wire fence would be maintained. One mile of pipeline would be completed. Approximately 3,500 acres of prescribed burning would be completed for improvement of livestock grazing forage.

Conclusion. There would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance and construction.

Impacts on Mule Deer Population

Over the long term, wilderness designation on the 46,300 acres recommended suitable would have a beneficial effect on mule deer population. Thirty-six thousand two hundred sixty acres of deer summer range 14,220 acres of deer winter range, and 5,760 acres of critical deer winter range would be maintained in good condition as a result of closure to ORV use and mineral and energy exploration and development.

Conclusion. The overall impact of wilderness designation of 46,300 acres would be beneficial to mule deer population. Nondesignation of 14,760 acres would result in a reduction in mule deer population.

Alternative C (No Wilderness)

Under this alternative, the 40,940 acre Fandango WSA would be recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to ORV use and the resulting reduction in naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation.

Impacts on Wilderness Values.

The immediate impact of this action would be negligible, since little development activity is anticipated in the short term whether or not the area is designated wilderness.

Five miles of cherrystem roads would receive vehicular use to provide required maintenance for five spring developments, five miles of pipeline, and two miles of barbed wire fence for livestock grazing management. This vehicle use would slightly reduce the area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude on 40,940 acres of the WSA.

In the northern portion of the WSA where most of the facilities are concentrated, there would be a moderate reduction in the area's naturalness and opportunities for solitude because most of the maintenance would be in a relatively small area of Cow Canyon. Approximately 1,500 acres of mechanical thinning would be accomplished.

In the projected future, increasing recreational ORV use is expected to cause a slight reduction of wilderness values. Recreational ORV use would increase slightly but would remain below 1,000 visits annually. Five cherrystem roads, with a total length of eleven miles, extending into the WSA from the northern and western boundaries would be maintained by vehicle use. Due to low use, creation of new trails or ways by recreational ORV use is not anticipated. Recreational ORV use would also lower the opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude slightly because visitors would see and hear ORVs in the area.

Exploration and development of mineral resources would not affect wilderness values, since none is expected.

> Conclusion. On 40,940 acres of the WSA, there would be a slight reduction of the area's naturalness and opportunities for solitude. In the Cow Canyon area of the WSA, there would be a moderate reduction of the area's naturalness and opportunities for solitude.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

The WSA would be open to ORVs. Recreational ORV use levels would increase but remain under 1,000 visits annually.

> Conclusion. There would be no impact on recreational ORV use.

Impacts on Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the Fandango WSA would remain open for mineral entry and mineral leasing. All potential mineral resources would be available for development. This includes 8,640 acres of moderate potential for oil and gas resources and 480 acres of moderate potential for geothermal resources. There would be no impact to development of potential mineral resources.

> Conclusion. There would be no impact on development of mineral resources.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

Maintenance of the existing grazing developments would not change. Planned range developments would be completed. One mile of pipeline would be completed and approximately 1,500 acres of prescribed burning would be accomplished.

Conclusion. There would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance and construction.

Impacts on Mule Deer Population

Over the projected future, due to the increase in ORV use and mineral and energy exploration and development, a reduction of mule deer population is expected. This may be slightly offset by mechanical thinning of 1,500 acres for browse re-establishment.

Conclusion. There would be a reduction in mule deer population.

Proposed Action (Partial Wilderness)

Under the Proposed Action, 66,110 acres of the Palisade Mesa WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation and 33,440 acres would be recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to the protection of wilderness values through wilderness designation and the resulting increases in naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

In this alternative, 66,110 acres of the Palisade Mesa WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation and 33,440 acres would be recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation. All wilderness values on the 66,110 acres recommended suitable for wilderness designation would receive the special legislative protection provided by wilderness designation. The areas of the most spectacular scenery and outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation and naturalness would be retained.

Seven miles of cherrystem roads would be open. Required maintenance would be provided for the existing five spring developments, and a five-acre water impoundment for livestock grazing management. Three miles of fence would be installed. The fence will blend with the surroundings and not effect wilderness values.

The entire suitable area of the WSA would be closed to ORV use. Cherrystem roads extending seven miles into the WSA, would be open to recreational ORV use. Approximately 500 visits of recreational ORV use are estimated to occur in the area at present. This would slightly reduce the area's naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation, and because visitors might encounter or hear ORV users in the area.

The 33,440 acres not designated wilderness would be open for recreational ORV use. Five miles of ways would be open for vehicle use. Recreational ORV use on this parcel would remain below 600 visits annually for the foreseeable future. This would reduce slightly the naturalness and opportunities for solitude on the 33,440 acres.

Exploration and development of mineral resources would not affect wilderness values, since none is expected.

All wilderness values would be maintained on 66,110 acres of the WSA. This includes the area of spectacular scenery, outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation, and naturalness.

Conclusion. On the 66,110 acres designated wilderness, the area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude would slightly reduce. The areas most spectacular scenery, naturalness, and opportunities for primitive recreation would be retained. On the 33,440 acres not designated wilderness, there would be a slight reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitide.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

Wilderness designation would close 66,110 acres of the WSA to recreational ORV use. The seven miles of cherrystem roads and 15 miles of ways would remain open for ORV use. Recreational vehicle use of approximately 500 visits would be expected to continue annually in the WSA.

The 33,440 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness would remain open to ORVs. Recreational ORV use levels would increase but remain under 600 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

Conclusion. No impact to recreational ORV use would occur on the 66,110 acres recommended suitable.

On the 33,440 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness, recreational ORV use would continue to increase, but would not exceed 600 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

Impacts on Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the 66,110 acres recommended as suitable for wilderness designation would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry and mineral leasing. This includes 4,800 acres with moderate potential for metallic minerals. Because this portion of the WSA has only one mining claim, no mineral development is expected.

All lands within the 33,440 acres recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation would remain open for mineral entry and leasing. All potential mineral resources would be available for development. This includes 7,360 acres of moderate potential for oil and gas resources and 4,160 acres with a moderate potential for metallic mineral resources. Development of these resources is unlikely because higher potential exists in more accessible locations outside the WSA.

Conclusion. No impact to mineral exploration or development would occur.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

The Palisade Mesa WSA would continue to be managed for livestock grazing. Five spring developments and a five acre water impoundment would be maintained. Three miles of fence would be completed.

Conclusion. There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and construction.

Adverse Impacts Which Cannot Be Avoided

On the 66,110 acres designated wilderness, the only unavoidable adverse impacts would be from the assumed precious metal mines, or others with valid discoveries.

On the 33,440 acres designated nonwilderness, the unavoidable adverse impacts would be those associated with mineral exploration and development. Some of these impacts may be reduced by careful examination and mitigation stipulations in the approved Notices of Intent and Plans of Operation.

Relationship Between Local Short-Term Uses of Man's Environment and Maintenance and Enhancement of Long-Term Productivity

On the 66,110 acres designated wilderness, the wilderness values would be protected, except in areas of valid discoveries.

On the 33,440 acres not designated wilderness, all present uses would continue. ORV use and mining exploration and developments would reduce the wilderness values.

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

On the 66,110 acres designated wilderness, no irreversible or irretrievable commitments of wilderness values is expected, except in areas of valid discoveries.

On the 33,440 acres designated nonwilderness, mining exploration and development would create an irreversible commitment of wilderness resources.

Alternative A (All Wilderness)

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the entire 99,550 acres of the Palisade Mesa WSA would be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation and all wilderness values would be protected by legislative mandate.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to the protection of wilderness values through wilderness designation and resulting increases in naturalness, opportunities for solitude, and primitive and unconfined recreation.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Nine miles of cherrystem roads would be closed. Required maintenance would be performed for the existing five spring developments, a five-acre water impoundment, and for livestock grazing management.

Three miles of pipeline would be completed in the WSA. This would have a negligible short-term effect on the area's naturalness in the immediate vicinity of the fence because of vegetation disturbance. Within one year of construction, vegetation would become re-established so that the disturbance would be substantially unnoticeable.

Five cherrystem roads extending nine miles into the WSA, and twenty miles of ways would be closed to recreational ORV use. This action would eliminate approximately 500 visits of recreational ORV use that are estimated to occur in the area at present. This would preserve the area's naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation slightly because of the near elimination of surface disturbance and because visitors would not encounter or hear ORV users in the area.

The wilderness values of naturalness, solitude, and primitive recreation, and the supplemental features of outstanding sightseeing in a diverse geologic area would be maintained on 99,550 acres of the WSA.

> Conclusion. On 99,550 acres of the WSA, there would be a slight improvement of the area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

Wilderness designation would close the 99,550 acres of the WSA to recreational ORV use. Recreational ORV use of approximately 500 visits would be eliminated annually from the WSA. Public land that offers similar opportunities for recreational ORV use is located throughout the region. Therefore, recreational ORV use foregone in the WSA would be absorbed on surrounding public lands.

> Conclusion. Recreational ORV use of 500 visits would be foregone on the 99,550 acres designated wilderness.

Impacts on Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the Palisade Mesa WSA would be withdrawn form all forms of mineral entry and mineral leasing. This includes 7,360 acres with moderate potential for oil and gas resources, and 8,960 acres of moderate potential for metallic mineral resources. There are only two existing mining claims. Development of these resources is unlikely because higher potential exists in more accessible locations outside the WSA.

Conclusion. No impacts to exploration or development of minerals would occur.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

The Palisade Mesa WSA would continue to be managed for livestock grazing use. A five acre water impoundment and five spring developments would be maintained. Three miles of fence would be completed.

Conclusion. There would be no impacts on grazing facility maintenance or construction.

Alternative B (Partial Wilderness)

Under this alternative, actions include combining the Palisade Mesa WSA with the The Wall WSA by closing the common boundary road, adjusting boundaries and closing and rehabilitating cherrystem roads.

A portion of the Palisade Mesa WSA, 83,550 acres, would be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation, and 30,320 acres of the The Wall WSA added to the original WSA to improve its manageability for a total of 113,870 acres. The remaining 23,680 acres, located along the periphery of the WSAs, would be recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to the protection of wilderness values through wilderness designation and the resulting increases in naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

In this alternative, 113,870 acres of the Palisade Mesa and The Wall WSAs would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation and 23,680 acres would be recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation. All wilderness values on the 113,870 acres recommended suitable for wilderness designation would receive the special legislative protection provided by wilderness designation. The areas of the most spectacular scenery and outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation and naturalness would be retained.

Eight miles of cherrystem roads and the common boundary road would be closed and rehabilitated. Required maintenance will be provided for the existing spring development, water impoundment, and barbed wire fence for livestock grazing management. Approximately three miles of fence would be accomplished. This would have a negligible effect on the WSA's naturalness since it will blend with the surroundings.

The entire recommended suitable area of the Palisade Mesa and The Wall WSAs, including cherrystem roads extending eight miles into the WSA and ten miles of ways would be closed to recreational ORV use. This action would eliminate approximately 760 visits of recreational ORV use that are estimated to occur in the area at present. This would improve the area's naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation slightly because of near elimination of surface disturbance and because visitors would not encounter or hear ORV users in the area.

The 23,680 acres not designated wilderness would be open for recreational ORV use. Fifteen miles of ways would be open for vehicle use. Recreational ORV use on this parcel would remain below 500 visits annually for the foreseeable future. This would reduce slightly the naturalness and opportunities for solitude on the 23,680 acres.

Exploration and development of mineral resources would not affect wilderness values, since none is expected.

All wilderness values would be maintained on 113,870 acres of both the WSAs. This includes the area of spectacular scenery, outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation, and naturalness.

> Conclusion. On the 113,870 acres designated wilderness, all wilderness values would be maintained. The area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude would improve slightly. On the 23,680 acres not designated wilderness, there would be a slight reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitude.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

Wilderness designation would close 113,870 acres of the WSA to recreational ORV use. Recreational vehicle use of approximately 760 visits would be eliminated annually from the WSA. Public land that offers similar opportunities for recreational ORV use is located throughout the region. Therefore, recreational use foregone would be absorbed on surrounding public lands.

The 23,680 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness would remain open to the ORVs. Recreational ORV use levels would increase but remain under 500 visitor days annually for the foreseeable future.

> Conclusion. Recreational ORV use would be foregone on the 113,870 acres designated wilderness and 760 visits would be foregone annually.
>
> On the 23,680 acre of the WSA not designated wilderness, recreational ORV use would continue to increase, but would not exceed 500 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

Impacts on Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the 113,887 acres recommended as suitable for wilderness designation would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry and mineral leasing. This includes 7,680 acres of moderate potential for metallic minerals. Development of potential mineral resources is unlikely because higher potential exists in more accessible locations outside the WSA.

All lands within the 23,680 acres recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation would remain open for mineral entry and leasing. All potential mineral resources would be available for development. This includes 7,360 acres with a moderate potential for oil and gas resources and 1,280 acres with a moderate potential for metallic mineral resources. Development of the potential resources is unlikely because higher potential exists in more accessible locations outside the WSA.

Conclusion. No impact to exploration or development of mineral resources would occur.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

Both the Palisade Mesa and The Wall WSAs would continue to be managed for livestock grazing. One spring development, one water impoundment, and the barbed wire fence would be maintained as they are now. Three miles of fence would be completed.

Conclusion. There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and construction.

Alternative C (No Wilderness)

Under the no wilderness alternative, the entire 99,550 acres of the Palisade Mesa WSA would be recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to the protection of wilderness values through wilderness designation and the resulting increases in naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The immediate impact of this action would be negligible, since little development activity is anticipated whether or not the area is designated wilderness.

No development of the two existing mining claims in the WSA is anticipated because higher potential exists in other locations.

Sights and sounds from recreational off-road vehicle use would have an adverse impact on solitude. However, this impact is expected to be slight since ORV use is estimated to be less than 500 visits annually and is expected to remain below 600 visits annually in the foreseeable future.

Other recreation uses would increase slightly, but would remain at levels below 400 visits annually for the foreseeable future. This increase would not significantly impact opportunities for solitude.

Three miles of fence are planned in the WSA and maintenance activities would not change. Grazing facility maintenance and construction actions would not affect wilderness values in the WSA.

Conclusion. There would be no impact to the wilderness values of size, naturalness, and outstanding opportunities for solitude.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

The WSA would be open to ORV use. Recreational ORV use would remain below 600 visits annually over the foreseeable future.

Conclusion. There would be no impact on recreational ORV use.

Impacts on Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the WSA would remain open for mineral entry and mineral leasing. All potential mineral resources would be available for development. This includes 8,960 acres with moderate favorability for occurrence of metallic minerals and 7,360 acres with a moderate favorability for oil and gas. Development of the metallic minerals is unlikely because high potential exists in other areas. Development of oil and gas is unlikely because of the lack of leases, exploration, industry interest, the high costs associated with test wells, the area's inaccessibility and location outside of a known oil and gas province, and better potential for reserves in other areas.

Because all potential minerals would remain available for development, there would be no impact to development of potential mineral resources.

Conclusion. No impact to mineral exploration or development would occur.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

Maintenance of the existing water impoundment and spring developments would not change and three miles of fence are planned within the WSA. Therefore, there would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance or construction.

Conclusion. There would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance.

Proposed Action (Partial Wilderness)

Under the Proposed Action, 30,320 acres of The Wall WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation and 7,680 acres would be recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to the protection of wilderness values through wilderness designation and the resulting increases in naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

All wilderness values on the 30,320 acres recommended suitable for wilderness designation would receive the special legislative protection provided by wilderness designation. The areas of the most spectacular scenery and outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation and naturalness would be retained.

One mile of cherrystem road would be closed. Required maintenance would be provided for the existing spring development, and one mile of barbed wire fence for livestock grazing management.

The entire recommended suitable portion of the WSA would be closed to ORV use. A cherrystem road extending one mile into the WSA, would be open to recreational ORV use. Approximately 250 visits of recreational ORV use are estimated to occur in the area at present. This would slightly reduce the area's naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation because visitors might encounter or hear ORV users in the area.

The 7,680 acres not designated wilderness would be open for recreational ORV use. A way five miles long would be open for vehicle use. Recreational ORV use on this parcel would remain below 300 visits annually for the foreseeable future. This would reduce slightly the naturalness and opportunities for solitude on the 7,680 acres.

All wilderness values would be maintained on 30,320 acres of the WSA. This includes the area of spectacular scenery, outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation, and naturalness.

> Conclusion. The area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude would reduce slightly.
>
> On the 7,680 acres not designated wilderness, there would be a slight reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitide.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

Wilderness designation would close 30,320 acres of the WSA to recreational ORV use. One mile of cherrystem road would remain open for ORV use. Recreational vehicle use of approximately 300 visits would be expected annually in the WSA.

The 7,680 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness would remain open to the ORVs. Recreational ORV use levels would increase but remain under 300 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

> Conclusion. No impact to recreational ORV use would occur.
>
> On the 7,680 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness, recreational ORV use would continue to increase, but would not exceed 300 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

The Wall WSA would continue to be managed for livestock grazing. One spring development and one mile of fence would be maintained.

> Conclusion. There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and construction.

Adverse Impacts Which Cannot Be Avoided

On the 30,320 acres designated wilderness, there are no unavoidable adverse impacts.

On the 7,680 acres designated nonwilderness, the unavoidable adverse impacts would be those associated with energy exploration and development. Some of these impacts may be reduced by careful examination and mitigation stipulations in the approved Notices of Intent and Plans of Operation.

Relationship Between Local Short-Term Uses of Man's Environment and Maintenance and Enhancement of Long-Term Productivity

On the 30,320 acres designated wilderness, the wilderness values would be protected.

On the 7,680 acres not designated wilderness, all present uses would continue. ORV use and energy exploration and development would reduce the wilderness values.

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

On the 30,320 acres designated wilderness, no irreversible or irretrievable commitments of wilderness values is expected.

On the 7,680 acres designated nonwilderness, mining exploration and development would create an irreversible commitment of wilderness resources.

Alternative A (All Wilderness)

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the entire 38,000 acres of The Wall WSA would be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to the protection of wilderness values through wilderness designation and resulting increases in naturalness, opportunities for solitude, and primitive and unconfined recreation.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

One mile of cherrystem road would be closed. Required maintenance would be performed for the existing spring development, and one mile of barbed wire fence for livestock grazing management.

One cherrystem road extending one mile into the WSA and five miles of ways would be closed to recreational ORV use. This action would eliminate approximately 250 visits of recreational ORV use that are estimated to occur in the area at present. This would improve the area's naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation slightly because of the near elimination of surface disturbance and because visitors would not encounter or hear ORV users in the area.

The wilderness values of naturalness, solitude, and primitive recreation, and the supplemental features of outstanding sightseeing in a diverse geologic area would be maintained on 38,000 acres of the WSA.

> Conclusion. On 38,000 acres of the WSA, there would be a slight improvement of the area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

Wilderness designation would close the 38,000 acres of the WSA to recreational ORV use. Recreation ORV use of approximately 250 visits would be eliminated annually from the WSA. Public land that offers similar opportunities for recreational ORV use is located throughout the region. Therefore, recreational ORV use foregone in the WSA would be absorbed on surrounding public lands.

> Conclusion. Recreational ORV use would be foregone on the 38,000 acres designated wilderness and 250 visits would be foregone annually.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

The Wall WSA would continue to be managed for livestock grazing. One spring development and one mile of fence would be maintained.

> Conclusion. There would be no impacts on grazing facility maintenance or construction.

Alternative B (Partial Wilderness)

Under this alternative, actions include combining the Palisade Mesa WSA with the The Wall WSA by closing the common boundary road, adjusting boundaries and closing and rehabilitating cherrystem roads.

A portion of the Palisade Mesa WSA, 83,550 acres, would be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation, including 30,320 acres of the The Wall WSA added to the original WSA to improve its manageability. The remaining 23,680 acres, located along the periphery of the WSAs, would be recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to the protection of wilderness values through wilderness designation and the resulting increases in naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

In this alternative, 113,870 acres of the Palisade Mesa and The Wall WSAs would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation and 23,680 acres would be recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation. All wilderness values on the 113,870 acres recommended suitable for wilderness designation would receive the special legislative protection provided by wilderness designation. The areas of the most spectacular scenery and outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation and naturalness would be retained.

Eight miles of cherrystem roads and the common boundary road would be closed and rehabilitated. Required maintenance will be provided for the existing spring development, water impoundment, and barbed wire fence and for livestock grazing management. Approximately 3 miles of fence would be accomplished. This would have a negligible effect on the WSA's naturalness since it will blend with the surroundings.

The entire recommended suitable Palisade Mesa and The Wall WSAs, cherrystem roads extending eight miles into the WSA, and ten miles of ways would be closed to recreational ORV use. This action would eliminate approximately 760 visits of recreational ORV use that are estimated to occur in the area at present. This would improve the area's naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation slightly because of near elimination of surface disturbance and because visitors would not encounter or hear ORV users in the area.

The 23,680 acres not designated wilderness would be open for recreational ORV use. Fifteen miles of ways would be open for vehicle use. Recreational ORV use on this parcel would remain below 500 visits annually for the foreseeable future. This would reduce slightly the naturalness and opportunities for solitude on the 23,680 acres.

> Conclusion. The area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude would improve slightly. On the 23,680 acres not designated wilderness, there would be a slight reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitude.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

Wilderness designation would close 113,870 acres of the WSA to recreational ORV use. Recreational vehicle use of approximately 1,000 visits would be eliminated annually from the WSA. Public land that offers similar opportunities for recreational ORV use is located throughout the region. Therefore, recreational use foregone would be absorbed on surrounding public lands.

The 23,680 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness would remain open to the ORVs. Recreational ORV use levels would increase but remain under 500 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

> Conclusion. Recreational ORV use would be foregone on the 113,870 acres designated wilderness and 1,000 visits would be foregone annually.
>
> On the 23,680 acre of the WSA not designated wilderness, recreational ORV use would continue to increase, but would not exceed 500 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

Both the Palisade Mesa and The Wall WSAs would continue to be managed for livestock grazing. One spring development, one water impoundment, and the barbed wire fence would be maintained. Three miles of fence would be completed in the WSA.

Conclusion. There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and construction.

Alternative C (No Wilderness)

Under the no wilderness alternative, the entire 38,000 acres of The Wall WSA would be recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

The short-term impact of this action would be negligible, since little development activity is anticipated in the short-term whether or not the area is designated wilderness.

Sights and sounds from recreational off-road vehicle use would have an adverse impact on solitude. However, this impact is expected to be slight since ORV use is estimated to be less than 500 visits annually and is expected to remain below 400 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

Other recreation uses would increase slightly, but would remain at levels below 150 visits annually for the foreseeable future. This increase would not significantly impact opportunities for solitude.

No new range developments are planned in the WSA and maintenance activities would not change. Grazing facility maintenance and construction actions would not affect wilderness values in the WSA.

Conclusion. There would be no impact to the wilderness values of size, naturalness, and outstanding opportunities for solitude.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

The WSA would be open to ORV use. Recreational ORV use would remain below the 400 visits annually over the and the foreseeable future.

Conclusion. There would be no impact on recreational ORV use.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

Maintenance of the existing fence and spring development would not change and no new range developments are planned within the WSA. Therefore, there would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance or construction.

Conclusion. There would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance or construction in The Wall WSA.

Proposed Action (Partial Wilderness)

Under the Proposed Action, 33,000 acres of the South Reveille WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation and 73,200 acres would be recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to the protection of wilderness values through wilderness designation and the resulting increases in naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

All wilderness values on the 33,000 acres recommended suitable for wilderness designation would receive the special legislative protection provided by wilderness designation. The areas of the most spectacular scenery and outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation and naturalness would be retained.

One mile of cherrystem road would remain open. Required maintenance will be provided for the existing five spring developments, a five acre water impoundment, and for livestock grazing management. Two springs would be developed in the WSA.

The entire recommended suitable WSA would be closed to ORV use. Cherrystem roads extending one mile into the WSA, and one mile of way would remain open to recreational ORV use. Approximately 2,700 visits of recreational ORV use are estimated to occur in the area at present. This would slightly reduce the area's naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation because visitors might encounter or hear ORV users in the area.

The 73,200 acres not designated wilderness would be open for recreational ORV use. Four miles of ways would be open for vehicle use. Recreational ORV use on this parcel would remain below 1,000 visits annually for the foreseeable future. This would reduce slightly the naturalness and opportunities for solitude on the 73,200 acres. One well will be developed.

Development of mineral resources would not affect wilderness values, since no mineral development is expected in the 33,000 acres recommended for wilderness, It is anticipated there will be one mineral resource development in the Reveille Mining area, within the nondesignated portion of the WSA. This development would disturb about ten acres in the WSA including the road, mine, and tailings.

It is assumed there would be a small producing oil field in the foreseeable future. About 40 acres inside the WSA would be disturbed, including the three miles of roads (5 acres), 20 acres of storage, and 15 acres for load out facilities.

All wilderness values would be maintained on all 33,000 acres of the WSA. This includes the area of spectacular scenery, outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation, and naturalness.

Conclusion. On the 33,000 acres designated wilderness, the area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude would reduce slightly. On the 73,200 acres not designated wilderness, there would be a slight reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitide.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

Wilderness designation would close 33,000 acres of the WSA to recreational ORV use. The one mile of cherrystem road and one mile of way would remain open for ORV use. Recreational vehicle use of approximately 995 visits would be expected annually in the WSA.

The 73,200 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness would remain open to the ORVs. Recreational ORV use levels would increase but remain under 1,000 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

Conclusion. No impact to recreational ORV use would occur.

On the 73,200 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness, recreational ORV use would continue to increase, but would not exceed 1,000 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

Impacts on Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the 33,000 acres recommended as suitable for wilderness designation would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry and mineral leasing. There are no potential mineral or energy resources in the suitable area.

All lands within the 73,200 acres recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation would remain open for mineral entry and leasing. All potential mineral resources would be available for development. This includes 55,000 acres of moderate potential for oil and gas resources, and 40,960 acres of moderate potential for geothermal resources and 28,160 acres of moderate potential for metallic minerals. One metallic mineral development is assumed in the Reveille Mine area. About 10 acres within the WSA would be disturbed including one mile of road (1.5 acres), one acre of mine site, three acres for the mill site and 4.5 acres of tailings.

It is assumed there would be a small producing oil field in the foreseeable future. About 40 acres inside the WSA would be disturbed, including the three miles of roads (5 acres), 20 acres of storage, and 15 acres for load out facilities.

Conclusion. No impact to development of mineral resources would occur.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

The South Reveille WSA would continue to be managed for livestock grazing. A water impoundment and five spring developments would be maintained. Two springs and a well will be developed.

Conclusion. There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and construction.

Impacts on High Erosion Potential Watershed

Under this alternative, 18,000 acres within the proposed wilderness area would be protected from excessive erosion. The remaining 5,800 acres would be accessible for mineral exploration and development. Mineral exploration and development could cause erosion problems on these watersheds. The impact would be surface erosion and gullies, caused by rainfall on poorly placed roads, cleared areas, and disturbed soil.

Conclusion. Rainfall on poorly placed roads, cleared areas, and disturbed soil as a result of mineral exploration and development could cause soil erosion on these watersheds.

Adverse Impacts Which Cannot Be Avoided

On the 33,000 acres designated wilderness, the only unavoidable adverse impacts would be the assumed precious metal mines, or others with valid discoveries.

On the 73,200 acres designated nonwilderness, the unavoidable adverse impacts would be those associated with mineral exploration and development. Some of these impacts may be reduced by careful examination and mitigation stipulations in the approved Notices of Intent and Plans of Operation.

Relationship Between Local Short-Term Uses of Man's Environment and Maintenance and Enhancement of Long-Term Productivity

On the 33,000 acres designated wilderness, the wilderness values would be protected, except in areas of valid discoveries.

On the 73,200 acres not designated wilderness, all present uses would continue. Off-road vehicle use and mining exploration and development would reduce the wilderness values.

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

On the 33,000 acres designated wilderness, no irreversible or irretrievable commitments of wilderness values is expected, except in areas of valid discoveries.

On the 73,200 acres designated nonwilderness, mining exploration and development would create an irreversible commitment of wilderness resources.

Alternative A (All Wilderness)

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the entire 106,200 acres of the South Reveille WSA would be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to the protection of wilderness values through wilderness designation and resulting increases in naturalness, opportunities for solitude, and primitive and unconfined recreation.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Three miles of cherrystem roads would be closed. Required maintenance would be provided for the existing five spring developments, and a five-acre water impoundment for livestock grazing management. In the Fang Ridge portion of the WSA where most of the facilities are concentrated, there would be a slight reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitude because the maintenance would be concentrated in a relatively small area. Two springs would be developed but a well would not.

One cherrystem road extending three miles into the WSA, and five miles of ways would be closed to recreational ORV use. This action would eliminate approximately 2,700 visits of recreational ORV use that are estimated to occur in the area at present. This would improve the area's naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation slightly because of the near elimination of surface disturbance and because visitors would not encounter or hear ORV users in the area.

Although this WSA has mineral leases, it is anticipated that none of these would be developed since no mineral leases could be established after wilderness designation. No impact to wilderness values would occur.

The wilderness values of naturalness, solitude, and primitive recreation, and the supplemental features of outstanding sightseeing in a diverse geologic area would be maintained on 106,200 acres of the WSA.

Conclusion. On 106,200 acres of the WSA, there would be a slight improvement of the area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude. There would be a slight decrease in the area's naturalness and opportunities for solitude in the Fang Ridge area of the WSA.

Impacts on Recreational Off-road Vehicle Use

Wilderness designation would close the 106,200 acres of the WSA to recreational ORV use. Recreational ORV use of approximately 2,700 visits would be eliminated annually from the WSA. Public land that offers similar opportunities for recreational ORV use is located throughout the region, therefore, recreational ORV use foregone in the WSA would be absorbed on surrounding public lands.

Conclusion. Recreational ORV use would be foregone on the 106,200 acres designated wilderness and 2,700 visits would be foregone annually.

Impacts on Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the South Reveille WSA would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry and mineral leasing. This includes 55,000 acres with a moderate potential for oil and gas resources, 40,960 acres with a moderate potential for geothermal resources, and 28,160 acres with a moderate potential for metallic minerals. The development of one small precious metals mine with valid existing rights is anticipated. About 10 acres within the WSA would be disturbed including one mile of road (1.5 acres), one acre for the mine, three acres for the mill site, and 4.5 acres for tailings.

Although this WSA has mineral leases, it is anticipated that none of these would be developed. Since no mineral leases could be established after wilderness designation, the potential for developing a small producing oil field under this alternative would be foregone.

Conclusion. Development of one small producing oil field would be foregone.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

The South Reveille WSA would continue to be managed for livestock grazing use. Five spring developments and a water impoundment would be maintained. Two springs would be developed but the well would not. This would affect the water availability in this area which also affects the range utilization.

Conclusion. One well would not be developed.

Impacts on High Erosion Potential Watershed

Under this alternative, all 23,800 acres of high erosion potential watersheds will be protected by wilderness designation. It is anticipated one precious metals mine would be developed on this watershed and about ten acres of disturbance would occur. This activity would be handled on a case-by-case basis to protect this watershed from excessive erosion.

Conclusion. It is anticipated one precious metals mine would be developed on this watershed and about ten acres of disturbance would occur.

Alternative C (No Wilderness)

Under the Resource Development, the entire 106,200-acre South Reveille WSA would be recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to the development of mineral resources and the resulting impacts on wilderness values in the long run.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The impact of this action would be important, development activity is anticipated if this area is not designated wilderness. It is anticipated there will be one small precious metal development in the Reveille Mining Area. This development will disturb about ten acres in the WSA including the road, mine, and tailings.

Hardrock exploration is anticipated at the rate of two Notices of Intent per year. Based on past experience, the disturbance would be about five acres per Notice of Intent.

Oil and gas exploration is also anticipated at the rate of about twelve miles of seismic lines per year. The area disturbed would be about 18 acres per line. The final result expected would be a small producing oil field with about 40 acres of disturbed area for the wells, roads, storage, and load-out facilities.

Sights and sounds from recreational off-road vehicle use would have an adverse impact on solitude. Off-road vehicle use is estimated to be less than 3,000 visits annually and is expected to remain below 4,000 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

Other recreation uses would increase slightly, but would remain at levels below 300 visits annually for the foreseeable future. This increase would not significantly impact opportunities for solitude.

Two spring developments and a well are planned in the WSA and maintenance activities would not change. Grazing facility maintenance and construction actions would not affect wilderness values in the WSA.

Conclusion. The South Reveille WSA's wilderness values of size, naturalness, and outstanding opportunities for solitude would be lost.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

The WSA would be open to ORV use. Recreational ORV use would remain below 4,000 visits annually over the foreseeable future.

Conclusion. There would be no impact on recreational ORV use.

Impacts on Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the WSA would remain open for mineral entry and mineral leasing. All potential mineral resources would be available for development. This includes 28,160 acres with moderate potential for occurrence of metallic minerals, 55,000 acres with moderate potential for oil and gas and 40,960 acres with a moderate potential for geothermal resources. Development of one metallic minerals claim is likely in the Reveille Mining area. Ten acres of disturbance is anticipated including one mile of road (1.5 acres), one acre for the mine, three acres of mill site, and 4.5 acres for tailings. Development of a small producing oil and gas field is likely. Ten acres of disturbance is anticipated including one mile of road (1.5 acres), one acre for the mine, three acres of mill site, and 4.5 acres for tailings. About 40 acres inside the WSA would be disturbed including three miles of roads (5 acres), 20 acres of storage, and 15 acres for load out facilities.

Because all potential minerals would remain available for development, there would be no impact to development of potential mineral resources.

Conclusion. There would be no impact on development of mineral resources in the South Reveille WSA.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

Maintenance of the five existing spring developments and one water impoundment would not change. Two spring developments and a well are planned within the WSA. There would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance or construction.

Conclusion. There would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance or construction in the South Reveille WSA.

Impacts on High Erosion Potential Watersheds

Under this alternative, none of the 23,800 acres of high erosion potential watershed will be designated as wilderness. Mineral exploration and development could cause erosion problems on these watersheds. The impact would be surface erosion and gullies caused by rainfall on poorly placed roads, cleared areas, and disturbed soil.

Conclusion. Rainfall on poorly placed roads, cleared areas, and disturbed soil as a result of mineral exploration and development could cause increased soil erosion on these watersheds.

BLUE EAGLE WSA (NV-060-158/199)

Proposed Action (Partial Wilderness)

Under the Proposed Action, 58,350 acres of the Blue Eagle WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation and 1,960 acres would be recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to the protection of wilderness values through wilderness designation and the resulting increases in naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

All wilderness values on the 58,350 acres recommended suitable for wilderness designation would receive the special legislative protection provided by wilderness designation. The areas of the most spectacular scenery and outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation and naturalness would be retained. Protection will be given to Bristlecone pine, a relic species, and white fir, a unique occurrence in central Nevada. Both can be found in the higher elevations. A pictograph site in the WSA will also be protected.

Five miles of cherrystem roads would remain open. Required maintenance would be provided for the existing five spring developments and for livestock grazing management. Six miles of new pipeline would be completed in the WSA. This would have a negligible effect on the area's naturalness in the immediate vicinity of the pipeline because of vegetative disturbance. Within three years of construction, vegetation would become re-established so that the disturbance would be substantially unnoticeable.

The entire recommended suitable WSA would be closed to ORV use. Cherrystem roads extending five miles into the WSA would remain open to recreational ORV use. Approximately 400 visits of recreational ORV use are estimated to occur in the area at present. This would slightly reduce the area's naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation because visitors might encounter or hear ORV users in the area.

The 8,960 acres not designated wilderness would be open for recreational ORV use. Three miles of way would be open for vehicle use. Recreational ORV use on this parcel would remain below 100 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

Oil and gas exploration is anticipated at the rate of about 20 miles of seismic lines per year. The area disturbed would be about 1.5 acres per mile. The final result expected would be a small producing oil field with about 50 acres of disturbed area for the wells, roads, storage, and load-out facilities. This would reduce the naturalness and opportunities for solitude on the 8,960 acres.

Development of mineral resources would not affect wilderness values, since no mineral development is expected.

Conclusion. On the 51,350 acres designated wilderness, the area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude would reduce slightly. On the 8,960 acres not designated wilderness, there would be a reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitide.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

Wilderness designation would close 51,350 acres of the WSA to recreational ORV use. Five miles of cherrystem roads would remain open for ORV use. Recreational vehicle use of approximately 400 visits would be expected annually in the WSA.

The 8,960 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness would remain open to the ORVs. Recreational ORV use levels would increase but remain under 100 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

Conclusion. No impact to recreational ORV use in the designated wilderness.

On the 8,960 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness, recreational ORV use would continue to increase, but would not exceed 100 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

Impacts on Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the 51,350 acres recommended as suitable for wilderness designation would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry and mineral leasing. There are no potential mineral or energy resources in this area.

All lands within the 8,960 acres recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation would remain open for mineral entry and leasing. All potential mineral resources would be available for development. This includes 2,000 acres of high potential for oil and gas resources and 960 acres of moderate potential for metallic minerals. Development of these resources is likely.

Oil and gas exploration is anticipated at a rate of about 20 miles of seismic lines per year. The area disturbed would be about 30 acres per line. The final result expected would be a small producing oil field with about 50 acres of disturbed area for the wells, three miles (5 acres) of roads, 30 acres for storage, and 15 acres of load-out facilities.

Conclusion. No impact to minerals development would occur.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

The Blue Eagle WSA would continue to be managed for livestock grazing use. Five spring developments would be maintained. Six miles of pipeline would be completed.

Conclusion. There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and construction.

Adverse Impacts Which Cannot Be Avoided

On the 51,350 acres designated wilderness, there will be no unavoidable adverse impacts.

On the 8,960 acres designated nonwilderness, the unavoidable adverse impacts would be those associated with energy and mineral exploration and development. Some of these impacts may be reduced by careful examination and mitigation stipulations in the approved Notices of Intent and Plans of Operation.

Relationship Between Local Short-Term Uses of Man's Environment and Maintenance and Enhancement of Long-Term Productivity

On the 51,350 acres designated wilderness, the wilderness values would be protected, except in areas of valid discoveries.

On the 8,960 acres not designated wilderness, all present uses would continue. Off-road vehicle use and energy and mining exploration and developments would reduce the wilderness values.

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

On the 51,350 acres designated wilderness, no irreversible or irretrievable commitments of wilderness values is expected, except in areas of valid discoveries.

On the 8,960 acres designated nonwilderness, energy and mining exploration and development would create an irreversible commitment of wilderness resources.

Alternative A (All Wilderness)

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the entire 59,560 acres of the Blue Eagle WSA would be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to the protection of wilderness values through wilderness designation and resulting increases in naturalness, opportunities for solitude, and primitive and unconfined recreation.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Six miles of cherrystem roads would be closed. Required maintenance would be provided for the existing five spring developments for livestock grazing management. In the northeastern portion of the WSA where most of the facilities are concentrated, there would be a slight reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitude because the maintenance would be concentrated in a relatively small area. Six miles of pipeline would be completed in the WSA. This would have a negligible short-term effect on the area's naturalness in the immediate vicinity of the pipeline because of vegetation disturbance. Within three years of construction, vegetation would become re-established so that the disturbance would be substantially unnoticeable.

One cherrystem road extending six miles into the WSA and fifteen miles of ways would be closed to recreational ORV use. This action would eliminate approximately 670 visits of recreational ORV use that are estimated to occur in the area at present. This would improve the area's naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation slightly because of the near elimination of surface disturbance and because visitors would not encounter or hear ORV users in the area.

The wilderness values of naturalness, solitude, and primitive recreation, and the supplemental features of outstanding sightseeing in a diverse geologic area would be maintained on 59,560 acres of the WSA.

Conclusion. On 59,560 acres of the WSA, there would be a slight improvement of the area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude. There would be a slight decrease in the area's naturalness opportunities in the northeastern area of the WSA.

Impacts on Recreational Off-road Vehicle Use

Wilderness designation would close the 59,560 acres of the WSA to recreational ORV use. Recreational ORV use of approximately 670 visits would be eliminated annually from the WSA. Public land that offers similar opportunities for recreational ORV use is located throughout the region. Therefore, recreational ORV use foregone in the WSA would be absorbed on surrounding public lands.

Conclusion. Recreational ORV use would be foregone on the 59,560 acres designated wilderness and 670 visits would be foregone annually.

Impacts on Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the Blue Eagle WSA would be withdrawn form all forms of mineral entry and mineral leasing. This includes 2,000 acres with high potential for oil and gas resources, and 960 acres with moderate potential for metallic minerals.

Although this WSA has mineral leases, it is anticipated that none of these would be developed. Since no mineral leases could be established after wilderness designation, the potential for developing a small producing oil field would be foregone under this alternative.

Conclusion. Oil and gas exploration on a small producing oil field would be foregone on 59,560 acres.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

The Blue Eagle WSA would be managed for livestock grazing use. Five spring developments would be maintained. Six miles of pipeline would be completed. There would be no impacts on grazing facility maintenance or construction.

Conclusion. There would be no impacts on grazing facility maintenance or construction.

Alternative B (Partial Wilderness)

Under this alternative, 59,350 acres of the Blue Eagle WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation and 960 acres would be recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to the protection of wilderness values through wilderness designation and the resulting increases in naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

All wilderness values on the 59,350 acres recommended suitable for wilderness designation would receive the special legislative protection provided by wilderness designation. The areas of the most spectacular scenery and outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation and naturalness would be retained.

Six miles of cherrystem road would be closed. Required maintenance will be provided for the existing five spring developments for livestock grazing management. In the northeastern portion of the WSA where most of the facilities are concentrated, there would be a slight reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitude because the maintenance would be concentrated in a relatively small area. Six miles of pipeline would be completed in the WSA. This would have a negligible short-term effect on the area's naturalness in the immediate vicinity of the pipeline because of vegetation disturbance. Within three years of construction, vegetation would become re-established so that the disturbance would be substantially unnoticeable.

The entire designated WSA, cherrystem road extending twelve miles into the WSA, and six miles of ways would be closed to recreational ORV use. This action would eliminate approximately 500 visits of recreational ORV use that are estimated to occur in the area at present. This would improve the area's naturalness and opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation slightly because of the near elimination of surface disturbance and because visitors would not encounter or hear ORV users in the area.

The 960 acres not designated wilderness would be open for recreational ORV use. Three miles of ways would be open for vehicle use. Recreational ORV use on this parcel would remain below 100 visits annually for the foreseeable future. Oil and gas exploration is anticipated at the rate of about 20 miles of seismic lines per year. The area disturbed would be about 30 acres per line. The final result expected would be a small producing oil field with about 50 acres of disturbed area for the wells, roads, storage, and load-out facilities. This would reduce the naturalness and opportunities for solitude on the 960 acres.

Development of mineral resources would not affect wilderness values, since no mineral development is expected.

All wilderness values would be maintained on all 59,350 acres of the WSA. This includes the area of spectacular scenery, outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation, and naturalness.

> Conclusion. The area's naturalness and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation and solitude would improve slightly. On the 960 acres not designated wilderness, there would be a reduction of naturalness and opportunities for solitide.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

Wilderness designation would close 59,350 acres of the WSA to recreational ORV use. Recreational vehicle use of approximately 500 visits would be eliminated annually from the WSA. Public land that offers similar opportunities for recreation ORV use is located throughout the region. Therefore, recreational use foregone would be absorbed on surrounding public lands.

The 960 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness would remain open to the ORVs. Recreational ORV use levels would increase but remain under 100 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

Conclusion. Recreational ORV use would be foregone on the 59,350 acres designated wilderness and 500 visits would be foregone annually.

On the 960 acres of the WSA not designated wilderness, recreational ORV use would continue to increase, but would not exceed 100 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

Impacts on Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the 59,350 acres recommended as suitable for wilderness designation would be withdrawn from all forms of mineral entry and mineral leasing. This includes 960 acres of moderate potential for metallic minerals and 400 acres of high potential for oil and gas.

All lands within the 960 acres recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation would remain open for mineral entry and leasing. All potential mineral resources would be available for development. This includes 960 acres with high potential for oil and gas resources. The development of a small producing oil field is anticipated.

Conclusion. No impacts to development of mineral resources would occur.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

All grazing facilities could be maintained as they are now. One spring development and six miles of pipeline would be completed.

Conclusion. There would be no impact to grazing facility maintenance and construction.

Alternative C (No Wilderness)

Under the No Wilderness Alternative, the 59,560 acres of the Blue Eagle WSA would be recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to the development of mineral resources and ORV use and the resulting impacts on wilderness values in the foreseeable future.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

The short-term impact of this action would be important, since oil and gas development activity is anticipated if area is not designated wilderness.

Oil and gas exploration is anticipated at the rate of about 20 miles of seismic lines per year. The area disturbed would be about 30 acres per line. The final result expected would be a small producing oil field with about 50 acres of disturbed area for the wells, roads, storage, and load-out facilities.

Sights and sounds from Recreational off-road vehicle use would have an adverse impact on solitude. However, this impact is expected to be slight since ORV use is estimated to be less than 670 visits annually and is expected to remain below 1,000 visits annually for the foreseeable future.

Other recreation uses would increase slightly, but would remain at levels below 400 visits annually for the foreseeable future. This increase would not significantly impact opportunities for solitude.

One spring development and six miles of pipeline are planned in the WSA and maintenance activities would not change. Grazing facility maintenance and construction actions would not affect wilderness values in the WSA.

Conclusion. The Blue Eagle WSA's wilderness values of size, naturalness, and outstanding opportunities for solitude would be lost.

Impacts on Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Use

The WSA would be open to ORV use. Recreational ORV use would remain below the 670 visits annually over the foreseeable future.

Conclusion. There would be no impact on recreational ORV use.

Impacts on Development of Mineral Resources

All lands within the WSA would remain open for mineral entry and mineral leasing. All potential mineral resources would be available for development. This includes a 960 acres with moderate favorability for occurrence of metallic minerals and a 2,0000 acres with high favorability for oil and gas. Development of the metallic minerals is unlikely. Notices of Intent are expected to be about four per year. Disturbed area is expected to be about 13 acres per year.

Development of oil and gas is likely. It is anticipated that seismic lines for oil and gas exploration will be about 20 miles per year. Disturbance will probably be about 29 acres. It is expected a small producing oil field may be the final result with a total disturbed area of 50 acres including three miles of roads (5 acres), 30 acres of storage, and 15 acres for load-out facilities.

Because all potential minerals would remain available for development, there would be no impact to development of potential mineral resources.

Conclusion. There would be no impact on development of mineral resources in the Blue Eagle WSA.

Impacts on Grazing Facility Maintenance and Construction

The Blue Eagle WSA would be managed for continued livestock grazing use. Five spring developments would be maintained, one spring development and six miles of pipeline planned within the WSA would be completed.

Conclusion. There would be no impact on grazing facility maintenance or construction in the Blue Eagle WSA.

CHAPTER 5

CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION IN DEVELOPING THE ALTERNATIVES

Public involvement was a planned and integral part of the wilderness study in the Tonopah Resources Area.

The Notice of Intent to Conduct the Wilderness Study in the Tonopah Resource was published in the Federal Register, Volume 46 Number 78, on April 23, 1981. The public was notified prior to public participation activities during the wilderness study through newspapers having general circulation in the area and through letters to individuals and organizations on the Tonopah Resource Area Wilderness Study mailing list.

Public meetings on the proposed planning issue and planning criteria were held in Tonopah, Las Vegas, and Reno, Nevada on May 2, 4, and 5, 1981, respectively. The proposed planning issue and planning criteria were again submitted for public review on August 1, 1981. They were approved and adopted for use in the Tonopah Resource Area Wilderness Study in September 1981.

An open house was held during the week of November 1-6, 1981, at the Tonopah Resource Area Office to develop, with the public, the alternatives to be evaluated in the environmental impact statement.

The permittees who graze livestock within the Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) were consulted during the summer of 1981. All range facilities within the Wilderness Study Areas being proposed for development under the Tonopah Individual Experimental Stewardship Program were identified.

Meetings were also held with the Nye County Planner, Nye County Commissioners, the Nevada State Clearinghouse, and the Battle Mountain District Multiple-Use Advisory Council during 1981 on the wilderness study process in the Tonopah Resource Area.

This consultation has not disclosed any inconsistencies between the designation of an area as wilderness and the officially approved and adopted resource-related plans of other Federal agencies, State and local governments, or Indian tribes.

The following items from the Nevada State-Wide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) and the Nye County General Plan, which were identified during the wilderness study process, pertain to wilderness designation.

The SCORP states on page 2-5 that "Unique natural and scenic areas must be managed more deliberately to offset the expanding human development and use of lands and waters that have accompanied population growth." Under discussion of the goals, it is recommended that, "areas with potential wilderness area qualities should retain a high priority for that designation, irrespective of their remoteness from urban centers" (SCORP, page 8-6). The SCORP supports the designation of some roadless areas as wilderness to provide primitive areas for the recreational demands of hunting, fishing, and hiking, as well as for reasons of preservation of some areas in a natural state for educational, scientific, aesthetic, wildlife, watershed, and personal pleasures.

The Nye County General Plan states on page 48 that "Open space: Perhaps one of the more important 'proposed' land use zoning categories is the OS (open space) recommended for most of the rural county areas. This classification permits all agricultural uses, wildlife and forest preserves, mining activities and certain other uses..." On pages 75 and 76 of the general plan, it states "Primitive Areas: Much of the recreation program in Nye County as in most other mid-Nevada jurisdictions should be focused on the conscious preservation of open space. Nye County is still comparatively untouched and untraveled. Much of the back country is still inaccessible except by horseback. These vacant areas are intended to balance the tendency to urbanization and to preserve the original environment so as to permit continued enjoyment of 'native' Nevada. These essentially take the form of wilderness and scenic areas, drainage basins, and areas of historical or cultural significance. Most require a bare minimum of maintenance other than a policy prohibition of any development which would change their intrinsic character. Nye County has many such areas, varying from the Upper Reese River to several vast mountain ranges still unbroken by enen a jeep road." Specifically mentioned in the plan is a discussion on Morey Peak. "Morey Mountain: One of the more important recreation areas lies about in the center of Nye County, approximately 10 miles north of U.S. 6. This recreation complex includes 4-mile and 6-mile Canyons with their historic charcoal kilns, plus a proposed camp site. It appears as a major feature of the Nevada State Park Plan" (Nye County General Plan, page 76).

Comments were requested from the following agencies, and interest groups:

FEDERAL

Environmental Protection Agency
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
U.S. Department of the Interior
  Bureau of Mines
  Bureau of Reclamation
  Fish and Wildlife Service
  Geological Survey
  Minerals Management Service
  National Park Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture
  Forest Service
  Soil Conservation Service
U.S. Department of Transportation

NEVADA - STATE AGENCIES

Office of the Governor
Nevada State Clearinghouse
  (25 copies for distribution to State Agencies)

NEVADA - LOCAL AGENCIES

Nye County Commissioners
Nye County Planner

INDIAN TRIBES

Duckwater Shoshone Tribe

UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA

-Desert Research Institute
-Max C. Fleishmann College of Agriculture
  -Division of Agricultural and Resource Economics
  -Division of Renewable Natural Resources
  -Nye County Exension Agent
-Makay School of Mines
-Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology

CONGRESSIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

Senator Howard Cannon
Senator Paul Laxalt
Congressman James Santini

NEVADA STATE LEGISLATORS

Richard E. Blakemore
Kenneth K. Redelsperger

OTHERS

-American Mining Congress
-Animal Protection Institute of America
-Battle Mountain District Multiple Use Advisory Council
-Citizens for Mining
-Desert Bighorn Council
-Friends of Nevada Wilderness
-Individuals on the Tonopah Wilderness Study Mailing List
-Institute of Ecology
-International Society for the Protection of Mustangs and Burros
-National Rifle Association of America
-Nationwide Forest Planning Clearinghouse
-Natural Resources Defense Council
-Nevada Cattlemen's Association
-Nevada Miners and Prospectors Association
-Nevada Representatives on the BLM National Multiple-Use Advisory Council
-Nevada Wildlife Federation
-Permittees who graze livestock in the Wilderness Study Areas
-Public Lands Council
-Red Rock Audubon Society
-Sierra Club, Great Basin Group
-Sierra Club, Las Vegas Group
-The American Wilderness Alliance
-The Nature Conservancy
-The Wildlife Society, Nevada Chapter

-Tonopah Historical Society
-Western Range Service
-Wilderness Society
-Wild Horse Organized Assistance
-Women in Mining

Copies of this final environmental impact statement will be available for review at the following BLM offices and public libraries.

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT OFFICES

Office of Public Affairs, BLM
18th and C Streets
Washington, D.C.

Nevada State Office
850 Harvard Way
Reno, Nevada

Battle Mountain District Office
N. 2nd and Scott Streets
Battle Mountain, Nevada

Battle Mountain District
Tonopah Resource Area Office
Building 102 Military Circle
Tonopah, Nevada

Carson City District Office
1535 Hot Springs Road, Suite 300
Carson City, Nevada

Elko District Office
2002 Idaho Street
Elko, Nevada

Ely District Office
Star Route 5, Box 1
Ely, Nevada

Las Vegas District Office
4765 West Vegas Drive
Las Vegas, Nevada

Las Vegas District Office
Caliente Resource Area Office
Caliente, Nevada

Winnemucca District Office
705 East 4th Street
Winnemucca, Nevada

PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Clark County Library
1401 East Flamingo Road
Las Vegas, Nevada

James R. Dickinson Library
Documents Department
University of Nevada at Las Vegas
4505 Maryland Parkway
Las Vegas, Nevada

Getchell Library
Government Publications Department
University of Nevada at Reno
Reno, Nevada

Lander County Library
Battle Mountain, Nevada

Nevada State Library
Documents Department
Library Building
Carson City, Nevada

Tonopah Public Library
Tonopah, Nevada

Washoe County Library
301 South Center Street
Reno, Nevada

White Pine County Library
Courthouse Plaza
Ely, Nevada

CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION IN DEVELOPING REVIEWING THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

A 90-day public comment period (April 9 to July 9, 1982) began subsequent to filing the draft environmental impact statement with the Environmental Protection Agency. The public review was scheduled to provide concerned agencies and publics the opportunity to review the draft environmental impact statement.

The draft environmental impact statement was filed with the Environmental Protection Agency on April 9, 1982. A BLM notice announcing the availability of the draft environmental impact statement was published in the April 21, 1982 issue of the Federal Register (Vol. 47, No. 77). This notice announced that the review period ended on July 9, 1982, and included notification of public hearings in Tonopah and Reno, Nevada. After the draft environmental impact statement was filed with the Environmental Protection Agency, over 400 copies were distributed to reviewing agencies, elected officials, and interested publics. The times and locations of the scheduled public hearings was included in a cover letter. Reading copies of the draft environmental impact statement were distributed to public libraries and BLM offices in Nevada. News releases were issued from the Tonopah Resource Area Office and the Nevada State Office to local and regional news media.

PUBLIC REVIEW AND HEARINGS

Two public hearings were held during the public review period on the draft environmental impact statement. Oral statements were presented by 5 people at the first hearing in Tonopah, Nevada on June 5, 1982, and by 25 people at the second and last hearing in Reno, Nevada on June 7, 1982.

Transcripts of the public hearings are available for inspection at the following BLM offices:

Tonopah Resource Area Office, Military Circle, Building 103, Tonopah, Nevada; Battle Mountain District Office, North 2nd and South Scott Streets, Battle Mountain, Nevada; Nevada State Office, 850 Harvard Way, Reno, Nevada; and the Office of Public Affairs, 18th and C Streets, Washington, D.C.

A total of 57 written comments were received during the public review period on the draft environmental impact statement.

All letters and testimony were reviewed to determine if they met the required criteria for response, i.e., discussion of the adequacy of the draft environmental impact statement. Substantive comments which presented new data, questioned facts and/or analyses, or commented on issues bearing directly on the draft environmental impact statement or the environmental impacts of the alternatives were fully evaluated and given responses. Changes or additions to the draft environmental impact statement have been incorporated into this final statement.

LIST OF PREPARERS

Diane Colcord, Cartography B.S. Art Education, 20 years BLM

Linda Hansen, A.A. Social Science, 6 years BLM

Calvin McKinlay, Natural Resource Specialist, B.S. Agronomy, 7 years BLM

Nadine McKinlay, Word Processor Operator, 6 years BLM

David Squires, Natural Resource Specialist, B.S. Wildlife Management, 8 years BLM

Victor Ross, Mining Engineer, B.S. Mining Engineering, 8 years BLM

INDEX TO COMMENT LETTERS

All of the letters received during the public comment period have been reprinted in this final environmental impact statement. In addition, excerpts from the public hearings record which required responses have also been reprinted. The numbers which appear next to the individual's name correspond to the number assigned to the reprinted public comment.

LIST OF COMMENTORS

LETTER No.	NAME
1.	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
2.	USDI, National Park Service
3.	USDI, Bureau of Mines
4.	USDI, Geological Survey
5.	USDI, Bureau of Indian Affairs
6.	USDI, Fish and Wildlife Service
7.	Department of the Air Force
8.	Nye County
9.	Courtney Smith
10.	Department of Health & Human Services
11.	State of Nevada, Clearinghouse
12.	Minerals Exploration Coalition
13.	Charles Neel
14.	John E. Hiner
15.	R. T. Forest
16.	John Hart
17.	NORANDA
18.	Fred R. Fugo
19.	E. A. Hollingsworth
20.	Sierra Pacific Power Co.
21.	Nevada Cattlemen's Association
22.	Al Richards
23.	Evangeline Schon
24.	Jo Ann Peden
25.	Nevada Outdoor Recreation Association
26.	Citizens for Mining
27.	Lane Simonian
28.	George Early
29.	GARRATT Geoservices
30.	Daryl Romeyn
31.	Dennis Ghiglieri
32.	Rose Strickland
33.	Gordon L. Pine
34.	Marcelene Varney
35.	Canorex International, Inc.
36.	Terry Kien
37.	Kappes, Cassiday & Associates
38.	Ann Hibbs
39.	A. J. Stevens
40.	John R. Swanson
41.	American Wilderness Alliance
42.	Nevada Resources, Inc.
43.	Freeport
44.	Freeport

Letter No.	Name
45.	Sierra Club, Toiyabe Chapter
46.	CONOCO
47.	Rose Strickland
48.	ARCO
49.	Ruth C. Douglas
50.	Jesus Christo/David Gregory
51.	Glenn Miller
52.	Tina Nappe
53.	Jean Diamond
54.	Marjorie Sill
55.	Betty Hulse
56.	Diane Nassir
	USDI, Bureau of Reclamation**

TESTIMONY

57.	Merle Richard
58.	Ross Smith
59.	Warren Richardson
60.	Curtis Spaulding
61.	Mike Del Grosso
62.	Bob Warren
63.	Doug McGibbon

** Received too late to be included in other USDI comment letters.

Comment Letter 1

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION IX
215 Fremont Street
San Francisco, Ca 94105

Mr. Edward F. Spang
State Director, Nevada
Bureau of Land Management
P.O. Box 12000
300 Booth Street
Reno, NV 89520

JUN 9 1982

Dear Mr. Spang:

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has received and reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) titled TONOPAH PRELIMINARY WILDERNESS RECOMMENDATIONS.

EPA's comments on the DEIS have been classified as Category LO-2. Definitions of the categories are provided by the enclosure. The classification and the date of the EPA's comments will be published in the Federal Register in accordance with our responsibility to inform the public of our views on proposed federal actions under Section 309 of the Clean Air Act. Our procedure is to categorize our comments on both the environmental consequences of the proposed action and the adequacy of the environmental statement.

EPA appreciates the opportunity to comment on this DEIS and requests two copies of the Final Environmental Impact Statement when available.

If you have any questions regarding our comments, please contact Lorette Kahn Bergsmien, Chief, EIS Review Section, at (415) 974-8188 or FTS 454-8188.

Sincerely yours,

John Wise

John Wise
Acting Director
Office of Policy, Technical
and Resources Management

Attachments (2)

Comment Letter 1

Water Quality Comments

1-1 The DEIS notes that "watersheds within the areas recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation, including six watersheds with high erosion potential, would not be afforded the long-term resource protection wilderness designation would provide." The statement seems to imply that these are unavoidable environmental consequences of a non-wilderness designation. Although specific project decisions are not being made in this EIS, the final EIS must clarify what mitigation practices or procedures would be required if projects on non-wilderness lands are likely to disturb these high-erosion-potential watersheds.

The DEIS does not discuss whether groundwater impacts are likely or not. Since a wilderness/non-wilderness decision affects future land uses (such as mineral exploration), any potential groundwater impacts and mitigation measures should be included.

Comment Letter 1

EIS CATEGORY CODES

Environmental Impact of the Action

LO—Lack of Objections

EPA has no objection to the proposed action as described in the draft impact statement; or suggests only minor changes in the proposed action.

ER—Environmental Reservations

EPA has reservations concerning the environmental effects of certain aspects of the proposed action. EPA believes that further study of suggested alternatives or modifications is required and has asked the originating Federal agency to reassess these aspects.

EU—Environmentally Unsatisfactory

EPA believes that the proposed action is unsatisfactory because of its potentially harmful effect on the environment. Furthermore, the Agency believes that the potential safeguards which might be utilized may not adequately protect the environment from hazards arising from this action. The Agency recommends that alternatives to the action be analyzed further (including the possibility of no action at all).

Adequacy of the Impact Statement

Category 1—Adequate

The draft impact statement adequately sets forth the environmental impact of the proposed project or action as well as alternatives reasonably available to the project or action.

Category 2—Insufficient Information

EPA believes that the draft impact statement does not contain sufficient information to assess fully the environmental impact of the proposed project or action. However, from the information submitted, the Agency is able to make a preliminary determination of the impact on the environment. EPA has requested that the originator provide the information that was not included in the draft statement.

Category 3—Inadequate

EPA believes that the draft impact statement does not adequately assess the environmental impact of the proposed project or action, or that the statement inadequately analyzes reasonably available alternatives. The Agency has requested more information and analysis concerning the potential environmental hazards and has asked that substantial revision be made to the impact statement.

If a draft impact statement is assigned a Category 3, no rating will be made of the project or action, since a basis does not generally exist on which to make such a determination.

Response Letter 1

1-1 The impact on high erosion potential watersheds is an issue analyzed in the final EIS in the South Roseville WSA. This watershed is the only one where activity is expected in the foreseeable future.

All requests for activities on other public lands are reviewed through environmental assessment or environmental impact statement to determine the anticipated impact on each resource, including erosion. Mitigating measures are included in these plans, and specifications for reducing or eliminating any adverse impacts where possible. Activities that cannot be satisfactorily mitigated may be refused at the discretion of the authorized official.

It is anticipated there will be little, if any, ground water impacts in areas where no perennial streams exist and the annual precipitation is low.

Comment Letter 2

United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

WESTERN REGION

450 GOLDEN GATE AVENUE BOX 36063

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94102

IN REPLY REFER TO:

L7617 (WR-RNE)

July 2, 1982

Mr. Leslie A. Monroe
Tonopah Resources Area Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Building 102 Military Circle, P.O. Box 911
Tonopah, Nevada 89049

Dear Mr. Monroe:

The National Park Service has concluded its review of the Tonopah Preliminary Wilderness Recommendations Draft Environmental Impact Statement and offers the following comments.

We note that page 3-6 of the document correctly identifies Lunar Crater as a designated National Natural Landmark located within the Palisade Mesa Wilderness Study Area. However, the DEIS does not identify the Hot Creek Range which is a potential landmark. This 84,700 acre landmark which is located in the Morey/Pancango Wilderness Study Area contains all the major ecosystem types typical of the Great Basin region (see attached brief and map).

2-1

The National Park Service supports the preferred alternative which would provide for management of these areas to protect the important landmark values of these areas.

Sincerely,

Howard H. Chapman

Howard H. Chapman
Regional Director, Western Region

Enclosures

Response Letter 2

2-1 The proposed Hot Creek National Landmark has been identified and is discussed in Chapter Three of the final EIS.

Comment Letter 2

Comment Letter 2

Natural Landmark Brief

1. Site: Hot Creek Range, Nye County, Nevada.

2. Description: The Hot Creek Range is located in central Nevada, 95 km (60 miles) northeast of Tonopah, Nevada. The Landmark area is in the north half of the Hot Creek Range and describes an irregularly-shaped square approximately 34,200 ha (84,700 acres). in size. The range trends north-south and is a fault block dominated by Morey Peak (elevation 3,123 m-10,246 feet). Morey Peak is centered on a caldera approximately 19 km (12 miles) wide by 32 km (20 miles) long.

Vegetation at lower elevations is dominated by pinyon-juniper woodland (Pinus monophylla-Juniperus osteosperma) and curl-leaf mahogany (Cercocarpus ledifolius), while limber pine (Pinus flexilis) and bristlecone pine (P. longaeva) dominate at higher elevations. The area is rich in avifauna, with raptors and small non-game species being especially numerous.

3. Owner: U.S. Government, administered by the Bureau of Land Management; and Private.

4. Proposed by: Vernon S. Roetick, et al., "Inventory of Natural Landmarks of the Great Basin", 1975.

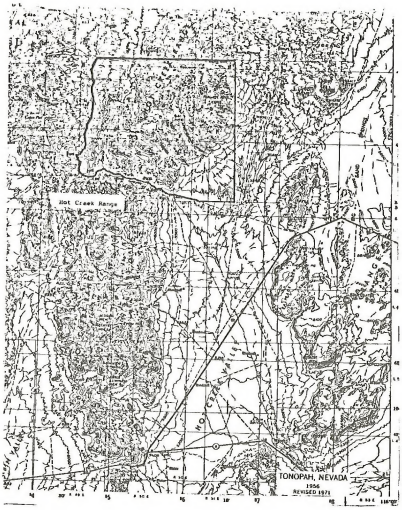
5. Significance: The Hot Creek Range is a typical mountain range of the central part of the Great Basin, and is representative of the floristic transition between the Sierras to the west and the Colorado Plateau and Rocky Mountains to the east; it shows evidence of the Mojave Desert/Great Basin gradation zone with a higher floral density than the mountains to the north or south. Specifically, the area contains all major ecosystem types from chaparral to boreal forest with isolated "islands" of relict arctic flores, plus a good population of bristlecone pine and a large wet meadow. Geologically, the Hot Creek Range is typical of middle Great Basin ranges with faulted borders and surrounding broad bajadas. In addition, Morey Peak and adjacent areas to the west are part of a caldera with interesting mineral suites around its margin. The country rock area to the south of the caldera rim shows the normal, but faulted, Paleozoic rock section.

6. Land use: Livestock grazing on lower slopes, some mining.

7. Dangers to Integrity: None known.

8. Special conditions: None known.

9. Evaluated by: Vernon Roetick, University of Nevada, Las Vegas; J. Keith Rigby, Brigham Young University; Neil E. West, Utah State University; and John R. Wilbanks, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.



Comment Letter 3

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF MINES
WESTERN FIELD OPERATIONS CENTER
EAST 360 3RD AVENUE
SPOKANE, WASHINGTON 99202

1986 OCT -6 AM 10:14

October 3, 1986

Memorandum

To: Terry L. Plummer, District Manager--Battle Mountain District Office, Bureau of Land Management, Battle Mountain, Nevada

From: Supervisor--Minerals Involvement Section, Branch of Engineering Studies

Subject: Draft Tonopah Wilderness Recommendations Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), Your Reference No. 8500 (NV-063.11)

We have reviewed the subject draft EIS for mineral considerations and found it to be adequate. We have no further comment.

D'Arcy R. Banister

Comment Letter 4

United States Department of the Interior
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
RESTON, VA 22092

1986 OCT 29 AM 10:58

In Reply Refer To:
WGS-Mail Stop 423

OCT 27 1986

Memorandum

To: Bureau of Land Management, Battle Mountain, Nevada

From: Chief, Environmental Affairs Program, Reston, Virginia

Subject: Review of draft Tonopah Preliminary Wilderness Recommendation/ Environmental Statement

We have reviewed the statement as requested in your letter of September 26.

We find that we have no comment to make.

Clifford A. Haupt

Routing List BMDO

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		TW	DM
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			TRA

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Remarks:

Comment Letter 5

United States Department of the Interior
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
EASTERN NEVADA AGENCY
P. O. BOX 26
Elko, Nevada 89801

IN REPLY REFER TO:

Branch of Realty
(702) 738-5165

Routing List BMDO			
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			Adm
			S/E
			TRA

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☐ Tose
Remarks:

October 21, 1986

Terry L. Plumner, District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Battle Mountain District Office
Attention: Cal McKinnley
2nd & Scott Street
P.O. Box 1420
Battle Mountain, Nevada 89820

Subject: Draft Tonopah Preliminary Wilderness Recommendations
Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)

Dear Mr. Plumner:

Pursuant to your request, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Eastern Nevada Agency has reviewed the Draft Tonopah Preliminary Wilderness Recommendations Environmental Impact Statement and have determined it to basically address all areas of concern adequately. Therefore, our Office finds the subject draft statement to be acceptable.

Sincerely,

Robert T. Bach

Acting Superintendent

Comment Letter 6

United States Department of the Interior
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
GREAT BASIN COMPLEX
4600 Kietzke Lane, Bldg. C
Reno, Nevada 89502

BLM
1986 OCT 22 PM 3:20
BATTLE MOUNTAIN, NEVADA
DISTRICT

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Remarks:

October 20, 1986

Memorandum

To: District Manager, Bureau of Land Management, Battle Mountain, Nevada

From: Complex Manager, Reno, Nevada

Subject: Draft Tonopah Preliminary Wilderness Recommendations
Environmental Impact Statement

We have no comment on the subject Environmental Impact Statement.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Richard J. Navarre

Comment Letter 7

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
NELLIS AIR FORCE BASE, NEVADA
NELLIS AIR FORCE BASE 89191

REPLY TO ATTN OF: DEEEP

4 June 1982

SUBJECT: Public Hearing - Wilderness Study Areas

TO: Bureau of Land Management
P. O. Box 911
Tonopah, NV 89049

1. To begin with, we would like to point out that Nellis AFB fully supports the goals of the Wilderness Act of 1964. However, we are also committed to certain requirements that are crucial to providing training for aircrews of the free world's forces. We believe the goals of the Wilderness Act and aircrew training are compatible, and can be accomodated on the same piece of ground and in the airspace above it.

2. In reviewing the BLM's Final Wilderness Management Policy, we were gratified to notice that it recognizes the need for essential military training missions over wilderness areas. We consider use of the airspace above wilderness areas as essential to national defense. Training of our aircrews in a simulated combat environment using realistic tactics provides them a definite advantage over any future adversary.

3. Our immediate and major concern is that no provision was made for small communication sites that we consider essential to our training mission. Among these are Range Measurement System (RMS) and Air Combat Maneuvering Instrumentation (ACMI) sites. These are small, unobtrusive pieces of equipment with maximum dimensions of 5' x 5' x 10' high. They are solar powered, self-contained, and usually installed on mountain tops using helicopters for the installation and maintenance of the equipment, with minimum disturbance of the environment. Maintenance usually consists of one trip per month with a duration of one hour at the site.

4. It is interesting to note that presently there are seven ACMI sites on the Desert National Wildlife Range which is administered as a de facto wilderness by the Fish and Wildlife Service.

5. We would like to point out that the need for sites such as these was established by HQ USAF during the public comment period, and we wish to enter into the record a copy of a letter from Mr. Barry F. Bleiman, Associate Director, Directorate of Engineering and Services, Headquarters, United States Air Force, to Mr. Edward L. Hastey, Acting Director, Bureau of Land Management, dated 26 March 1981. In addition, I would like to enter into the record photos of RMS and ACMI sites.

James P. McDermott

JAMES P. MC DERMOTT
Range Environmental Coordinator

1 Atch
HQ USAF Ltr, 26 Mar 81, and
4 photos

Readiness is our Profession

Comment Letter 8

NYE COUNTY

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING
THOMAS H. TROTTER
Director
ROBERT L. HANKS
Assistant Planner

July 9, 1982

Mr. Les Monroe
Tonopah Resource Area Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Military Circle, Building 102
P. O. Box 911
Tonopah, NV 89049

Re: Tonopah Preliminary Wilderness Recommendations:
D.E.I.S. dated April 9, 1982

Dear Les:

The Nye County Department of Planning has reviewed the "Tonopah Preliminary Wilderness Recommendations: D.E.I.S." and has presented its findings to the Nye County Board of Commissioners. At their July 7th meeting, agreement was achieved on this text. This response is intended to assist the U. S. Department of the Interior/BLM in ongoing planning and environmental analysis of a number of selected study areas, all located within Nye County, Nevada, for possible inclusion within the National Wilderness System.

We should state that we are not opposed in principal to wilderness land area "set aside". When viewing all the proposals being considered...fair consideration of these proposals cannot be given on the basis of this report due to its conceptual nature. Our statements reflect the belief that additional study will be undertaken and that changes within the Wilderness Study Areas designations will occur. Thus, being "opposed" or "not opposed" (see page 4, this letter) reflects viewpoints on specific issues as presented. Whether wilderness designations ought to receive continued consideration under varying alternatives will evolve from this review process.

GENERAL STATEMENT

Throughout the report an underlying theme emerges which can only be interpreted as some notion that the "encroachment by man" into and upon these remote land areas will cause a

COUNTY OF NYE • PO BOX 153 • TONOPAH, NEVADA 89049 • (702) 482-3581

Comment Letter 8

Mr. Les Monroe, BLM
Re: Tonopah D.E.I.S. Response
Page 2

number of "values" to be lost as a National resource. Documentation as to what constitutes "encroachment by man" is not adequate.

No actual measure of man's entrance into and confrontation with established "use thresholds" with these lands has been determined. Questions still to be answered concern the relative level of significance of designating these "study
8-1 areas" for wilderness of National value. We believe there to be no current, anticipated or future encroachments by development; thus the premise is fallacious that if action is not taken soon, that all will be lost.

8-2 Specific corrective management actions could be undertaken by the BLM in most study areas to accomplish identified goals without the additional requirement of totally limiting ongoing activities within these designated areas, such as for future mineral exploration. Thus realistic alternative actions have not been presented.

There is a question as to whether these areas, when viewed
8-3 on their relative merits, warrant inclusion within a National Wilderness System at all; again, are the features unique and significant enough to warrant inclusion in the program while being viewed with those of other comparable study areas?

No "integration" of analysis has been presented of U.S. Department of Interior/Forest Service lands located in proximity to some of these BLM Wilderness study areas; con-
8-4 sideration of their possible "combined-withdrawal" has not been presented. All statistics and land areas to be evaluated should include those under Forest Service jurisdiction. The manner in which acreage figures are portrayed in the BLM/ Tonopah report is misleading and is described in fact of the agency. It, however, is not a true and accurate portrayal of circumstances "on the ground".

8-5 Nye County adopted a Master Plan in 1971. No reference or review of County goals and objectives has presented. The identification of probable adverse impacts should be presented.

ISSUES OF CONCERN

A. PUBLIC DEMAND FOR WILDERNESS

Believe there to be an unsubstantiated and unquantified demand by the general public for "Wilderness features" within the Nevada Great Basin. Adverse impacts may be created on tourism, recreational sports, etc. Document the scale of social/community related impacts.

Response Letter 8

8-1 Anticipated impacts to wilderness values analyzed in this document are based on projections for development that logically could occur within the foreseeable future. An analysis of existing development and past history of interest in the area were used in determining where these impacts might occur.

8-2 Although the Wilderness Act is aimed at "preservation" of resource values, it is not a lock-up of public lands. The Wilderness Management Policy, which will be the ruling authority for designated wilderness areas, outlines guidelines for the continuation of many uses which occur now under FLPMA (i.e., livestock grazing, fish and wildlife development and use, outdoor recreation, and even mineral exploration and development). In the inventory process, conflicting uses were considered in determining areas to be recommended suitable for study. Most of these conflicts were eliminated before the study process was complete. Other effects of designation are analyzed in this document. Effects of other uses on the values of naturalness, solitude, and primitive and unconfined types of recreation are also analyzed. Congress, through the evaluation of these effects, will make the final determination of what is the best use of the public lands.

8-3 Each wilderness study area (WSA) must be evaluated on its own merits and whether it meets the wilderness criteria. It was determined during the inventory process that each of the WSAs in the Tonopah Resource Area met the criteria.

8-4 The only lands evaluated in the Tonopah Resource Area are those public lands under administration of the BLM. However, during the inventory and study phases, such factors as diversity, ecosystems present, distance to metropolitan areas, other geologic features, as well as other areas administratively endorsed for wilderness designation are considered.

8-5 Please refer to the Consultation and Coordination section of Chapter Five for a discussion of how the Nye County General Plan was incorporated into this EIS.

Comment Letter 8

Mr. Lee Monroe, BLM
Re: Tonopah D.E.I.S. Response
Page 3

B. APPROPRIATENESS OF WILDERNESS DESIGNATION(S)

The opportunity for a "wilderness", or in this instance a "primitive" experience, is currently already available within these areas and the imposition of jurisdictional limits will not materially affect man's venture into these areas.

No evidence has been presented to suggest that man's opportunity for a "primitive" wilderness experience is being threatened or in danger of being lost as a resource value.

8-6 There are generalized references to wilderness "values" - by whom and for whom? Please define, document and justify!

Public concern has been expressed over the need for, and requirement of, withholding lands as being "representative" of the Great Basin Sagebrush Ecosystem. We understand the intent, however, remain unconvinced that when viewing the basin in total that these specific site location(s) (i.e.: South Reveille/Palisade Mesa/The Wall) best represents the unique wilderness features necessary for inclusion within a National Wilderness System.

C. PUBLIC ACCESS

A full comprehension of the situation regarding public access is not clear; these areas are already practically inaccessable to the majority of the public, with or without motorized vehicles!

The report states on Pages 3-7, "off road vehicle use is currently light and dispersed throughout the resource areas, with the majority of motor vehicles use occuring on existing ways and roads". BLM staff have stated that surveys have not been undertaken nor statistics gathered to represent vehicle and/or people visits to these areas.

8-7 We question the substantiation for removing, or reducing public access to some of these lands; the justification is not there, particularly with respect to the elderly or the less able.

Identify problems with precident setting aspects of closing access roads into wilderness areas.

D. ECONOMIC IMPACTS

8-8 Direct, or indirect, employment in the mining industry in Nye County (other than Nevada Test Site related jobs) amounts to some 80% of total employment within the work force.

Response Letter 8

8-6 Wilderness values are defined in the Wilderness Act of 1964. These definitions are included in the Glossary and are discussed in Chapter Three for each WSA.

8-7 Please refer to response # 8-2 above.

8-8 The major problem underlying economic evaluation of minerals is the great uncertainty regarding the existence of mineral deposits in sufficient quantity and quality to be commercially feasible. At present, mineral potential is undetermined. In addition, long range mineral resource evaluation and market demand are, at best, speculative.

The possibility of foregoing an opportunity for future mineral development has been recognized, and any areas recommended for designation as wilderness will have intensive mineral investories conducted by the U.S. Bureau of Mines.

Comment Letter 8

Mr. Lee Monroe, BLM
Re: Tonopah D.E.I.S. Response
Page 4

to represent, as does the report, that "the alternatives have little potential for affecting the economic growth of Nye County except through restrictions of mineral development" is to slight the very lifeblood of this County's economy for some 70-80 years.

Conversely, tourism, which is stressed in this report, has a reported workforce level of around 6% of all county employment.

E. ONGOING MANAGEMENT

Specific circumstances and issues should be described as factors "affecting the manageability" of the proposed wilderness areas.

No specific evidence has been presented to justify the statement that by combining adjacent WSA areas, "that management efficiencies and improvements would be effected".

8-9 Will there be an identification of specific management tasks, work force levels, timetables and budgets being allocated within the EIS/Management framework for "managed under the interim Management Policy for lands under review action"...?

The preservationist philosophy with respect to Wilderness (forever wild) has some built-in dangers. This writer has seen the "no management - management approach" produce biological deserts with choked-out forests, choked-out wildlife forage, "even-aged" ecological traps: all of little
8-10 interest to man or animal alike. What tasks will be set in place to avert the creation of "ecological traps" within these wilderness study areas?

If Federal BLM funding levels are inadequate or programs
8-11 not funded; do the WSA's revert back to the management framework plan designations of current BLM policy? Will the wilderness designations then automatically expire?

III. SPECIFIC AREA COMMENTS

In the event that the general concerns stated above are adequately addressed, and that potential adverse impacts are mitigated, then...

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE: WILDERNESS STUDY AREA(s)

Fandango/Morey: Oppose

Concern over reduction of public access through six-mile canyon road; alternative should be developed to continue

Response Letter 8

8-9 The Bureau is mandated by law to manage wilderness to preserve wilderness values while allowing for current levels of activity. Guidelines for managing WSAs are contained in the "Interim Management Policy and Guidelines for Lands Under Wilderness Review". Required tasks and reports on interim management are outlined each year in the annual budget process. It is anticipated that funding levels will be sufficient to carry out the tasks.

8-10 The Wilderness Management Policy outlines specific guidance for development of wilderness management plans in designated wilderness areas. These plans will guide implementation of the wilderness management policy in each specific WSA, taking into consideration the specific needs and management requirements of that area.

8-11 Once an area is designated as wilderness it will continue to be managed as wilderness. The official wilderness designation will constitute an amendment to the current land use plan (the Tonopah MFP) and therefore no reversion to the "old" plan would be made.

Comment Letter 8

Mr. Les Monroe, BLM
Re: Tonopah D.E.I.S. Response
Page 5

8-12 to accomodate public access, vehicle parking and camping to this area, while possibly maintaining wilderness values and correcting surficial problems with six-mile creek itself.

Palisade Mesa/The Wall: Not opposed

8-13 Believe opportunities exist within the area for some wilderness experience. Questions should be answered as to whether, whatever wildlife values that are present, for example, would benefit from wilderness designation. Detailed mineral resource analysis may change ratings for this area from low to high potential.

Blue Eagle: Not opposed

The most suitable of all study areas. Based on report, overall program objectives are best represented by this area designation.

Southe Raveille: Not opposed

Believe a detailed study of the original WSA should be considered.

8-14 Analysis of the merits of further consideration of a "representative Valley-system" should be evaluated both for the WSA itself and the Great Basin Desert Sagebrush Ecosystem withdrawal as a whole. WSA values represented therein should be evaluated against like ecosystems within, say, a four or five state region.

Considerations for hunter access, livestock and wild horse management, water development, and mineral potential should receive continuing analysis.

Nye County maintains an excellent working relationship with the BLM/Tonopah Resource Area Office. We welcome the opportunity to be of ongoing assistance in the review of this program.

Sincerely,

Thomas E. Trottier
Director
Nye County Department of Planning

Response Letter 8

8-12 The Proposed Action analyzed in this final EIS has considered these options.

8-13 All affected resource values are analyzed in this EIS for impacts, both good and bad, from designation of wilderness. These impacts are outlined in Chapter Four of this document for each WSA. If minerals data collected during the minerals survey indicates a change in rating, such change will be noted and recommendations may be changed based on this new information.

8-14 This analysis is considered during the study and inventory phases of the process when making recommendations for wilderness study areas.

Comment Letter 8

Mr. Lee Monroe, BLM
Re: Tonopah D.E.I.S. Response
Page 6

cc: Nye County Board of Commissioners (3)
P. Knight, Nye County District Attorney
H. James Fox, District Manager, Battle Mountain District/BLM
Howard Cannon, U. S. Senator
Paul Laxalt, U. S. Senator
James Santini, U. S. Congressman
Richard E. Blakemore, Nevada State Senator
Kenneth Redelsperger, Nevada State Assemblyman

TWY/lt

Comment Letter 9

Nevada has traditionally been thought of as a wild, untamed vast expanse of land. The state, recently as well as at the present, has only one area designated as wilderness. One might think that because the state has only one designated wilderness area there are almost no interesting areas left in the state that are truly wild and untamed. Fortunately, there are a good number of these untamed areas left in the state; many of these are on BLM land. Yet essentially all of these areas are gradually being encroached on by man. Thus, it is possible that this image of our state could become quite close to being a fallacy. I do not feel that roads and mining activity associated with roads are compatible with this image of an untamed and wild place. I believe that the only way to keep this image as well as to truly uphold it is to designate these remaining outposts of wild, untamed land as wilderness. It is because of this reason that I support your recommendations for wilderness except for one thing. This is that I can see no reason why the Monitor Range with its two lakes and its waterfall should not be recommended for wilderness. I strongly encourage you to do so in your Final recommendations.

Courtney Smith

Courtney Smith
1730 O'Farrell St.
Reno, NV 89503

Comment Letter 10

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Public Health Service

Centers for Disease Control
Atlanta, Georgia 30333
(404) 262-6649

July 2, 1982

RECEIVED
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
JUL 07 ...
TONOPAH RESOURCE
AREA OFFICE

Mr. Leslie A. Monroe
Tonopah Resource Area Manager
Building 102 Military Circle
P. O. Box 911
Tonopah, Nevada 89049

Dear Mr. Monroe:

We have reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Preliminary Wilderness Recommendations for the Tonopah Resource Area in Nye County, Nevada. We are responding on behalf of the U.S. Public Health Service and are offering the following comments for your consideration in preparing the final document.

10-1 The designation of wilderness areas should also consider public health implications. In assessing the opportunities for "solitude or primitive recreation," the water quality of each wilderness area should be studied to determine the potential effects of natural or man-induced contamination on any area water-courses or water bodies. The presence of hazards such as mine shafts, highly toxic or contaminated water, and the unavailability of suitable drinking water are factors that should be considered in (1) the preliminary designation and (2) any program plans to improve a designated wilderness area for special recreation opportunities.

Those areas that will not receive wilderness designation and that would be subject to resource development could adversely impact the wilderness values of contiguous designated areas. The effect of adverse impacts from these adjacent areas on the wilderness areas should also be considered in the Final EIS.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this Draft EIS. Please send us one copy of the final document when it becomes available. Should you have any questions about our comments, please contact Mr. Robert Kay of my staff at FTS 236-6649.

Sincerely yours,

for Charles W. Lindy

Frank S. Lisella, Ph.D.
Chief, Environmental Affairs Group
Environmental Health Services Division
Center for Environmental Health

Response Letter 10

10-1 It was determined that the watershed area within the South Reveille WSA was the only area which could possibly be impacted by future development within the WSAs. This has been analyzed in Chapter Four under the environmental consequences section. Other waters which occur within the WSAs are discussed in terms of wilderness values in Chapter Three for each WSA.

Comment Letter 11

May 21, 1982

Mr. Leslie A. Monroe
Tonopah Resource Area Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Building 002 Military Circle
P.O. Box 911
Tonopah, Nevada 89049

RE: SAI #82300049 Project: Draft Tonopah Wilderness EIS

Dear Mr. Monroe:

Attached are the comments from the following affected State Agencies: Division of State Parks and the Department of Wildlife concerning the above referenced project.

These comments constitute the State Clearinghouse review of this proposal. Please address these comments or concerns in the final decision.

Sincerely,

John Wm. Sparbel
State Planning Coordinator

JWS/sl
Enclosure

Comment Letter 11

NEVADA

DIVISION OF STATE PARKS

MEMO

TO: John Sparbel

FROM: John L. Meder

DATE: May 14, 1982

SUBJECT: WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS, TONOPAH RESOURCE AREA, #2300049

The Nevada Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) documents outdoor recreation, conservation, and open space needs for the State. It provides a comprehensive description of problems and opportunities that must be addressed squarely by the many public and private entities concerned. Such agencies individually can determine whether Nevada's outdoor recreational environment declines, survives, or truly flourishes. Taken all together, their impact is greatly magnified. The SCORP's primary aim is to carefully examine that collective influence and provide a policy basis to improve it.

One of the goals identified in the SCORP (page 2-5, #4) is that "Unique natural and scenic areas must be managed more deliberately to offset the expanding human development and use of lands and waters that have accompanied population growth." The required actions include: "classification of some lands as wilderness."

Under discussion of the goals (page 8-6, #2A), it is recommended that, "...areas with potential wilderness area qualities should retain a high priority for that designation, irrespective of their remoteness from urban centers." Therefore, the SCORP supports the designation of some roadless areas as Wilderness to provide primative areas for the recreational demands of hunting, fishing and hiking as well as for reasons of preservation of some areas in a natural state for educational, scientific, aesthetic, wildlife, watershed and personal pleasures.

The discussion in the SCORP of Wilderness and Primitive Area Protection includes the following summarized comments (page 7-8 to 7-8). Recreational planning and development should not divert Nevadans from the action needed to preserve parts of the State in their natural condition. The need to do this is less tangible than the need for developed parks and recreational areas, but is no less urgent.

The term "wilderness" evokes strong feelings from proponents and opponents of the concept that some areas should remain essentially unmodified by human development. Opponents interpret it as an area "locked up" against any other uses but occasional solitary enjoyment by those whose livelihood does not depend on economic use of resources in the areas they propose for wilderness management. In Nevada, as in many parts of the West, there is resentment of the suggestion that any publicly owned open spaces should be encumbered by regulations against particular uses. Unregulated public access to these lands is jealously guarded as a birthright.

a division of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

Comment Letter 11

From the other side of the table, proponents argue that wilderness management does not categorically lock out most recreational uses, grazing or mining. They assert that wilderness areas are economically productive in a broad sense, as well as spiritually refreshing. They note that less than one tenth of one percent of Nevada's public land is classified as wilderness, the lowest of any western state. They also are sure that a wide cross-section of the population benefits from preservation of valuable wilderness resources. They assert that vast areas of other suitable U.S. Forest Service and BLM lands will remain accessible to private vehicles, even if actual wilderness designations restrict such access in a few areas.

The National Wilderness Act of 1964 originally mandated review of 2,022,847 acres of public lands in Nevada for possible inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System. This acreage represents about 2.8 percent of the federal land in Nevada. Only the Jarbidge Wilderness has been approved, comprising 64,847 acres or .09 percent of Nevada federal lands.

Currently, there are less than 8 million acres in Nevada under consideration as Wilderness, as either administratively endorsed as suitable or for further planning.

It is important to keep in view the fact that even if an area is eventually approved for Wilderness classification in the national system, that they will remain open for recreational use by hunters, fishermen, and hikers. The Wilderness Act of 1964 permits grazing and mineral prospecting to continue, as well as permitting continued mining on patented claims. Permanent roads and private motor vehicle use are prohibited, but access by fire fighting and other service vehicles can continue.

We are very concerned that recreation, open space, natural areas education, scientific research, aesthetic, wildlife, and other activities that require a natural protected environment have an opportunity to continue during future generations.

From a recreational standpoint, in Nevada, preference is higher for dispersed recreational activities, i.e., hunting, rock-collecting, fishing, hiking and backpacking, nature study, etc., than more site specific activities such as boating, golf, and baseball. The SCORP points out that in every planning region fishing and hunting, hiking and walking were listed among the favorite activities. Fishing ranked first in every region, except Clark County where it was third, as the favorite activity. Hunting ranked as second or third favorite activity in the rural districts and fourth in the Reno/Sparks/Carson City district. In three state park user surveys (1972, 1975, and 1977), hiking was checked most frequently as the park activity desired. The SCORP points out, also, that in every planning region, walking and hiking were listed among the favorite activities. Particularly significant in the SCORP survey figures is the high participation rate for hiking and walking in the Reno/Sparks/Carson City area (Region I). Actual participation in these two activities was second only to bicycle riding.

Comment Letter 11

In the Las Vegas area (Region III) hiking and walking was listed as the fourth favorite activity while placing fifth in actual participation. The trail users have priorities which place a high value on scenic beauty, variety and naturalness. The U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management administer the vast majority of the lands in Nevada amenable to hiking and walking. The SCORP also indicates that hunting, fishing and trail related activities are among the highest in forecasted increase.

Senator Howard Cannon in a 1981 survey of Nevadans found that there was overall significant support (58% support to 41% nonsupport) for designating certain U.S.F.S. Rare II areas as Wilderness, even when the survey question, in our opinion, was biased against wilderness.

A recent study by the Division, entitled Dispersed Recreation in Nevada, 1981, indicates that a significant portion of dispersed recreational activities, i.e. primitive camping, hiking, backpacking, exploring, etc. occurs in Planning Region II. This Region includes Nye, Esmeralda and Mineral Counties. According to this study 83.3 percent of the residents of Nevada participate in some dispersed recreational activity each year. Planning Region II has 2.0 percent of the state's total population, in comparison to the following percent of statewide activity occuring in the region for these wilderness related activities: primitive camping 9.7; hiking, backpacking 3.4; rockhounding 22.4; horseback riding 16.4; exploring 8.4; hunting 10.4; photography 10.6; sightseeing 8.3; and fishing 5.7.

In a summer 1981 statewide SCORP survey (10,500 mailout) of outdoor recreational issues, the following attitudes were recorded. Statewide 87.39 percent strongly agree, and 25.60 percent agree that Nevada's unique, natural and unusual areas need preserving; 3.01 percent disagree and 4.39 percent did not respond. In Planning Region II, for the same question, 43 percent strongly agree, 35 percent agree, 11 percent disagree while 11 percent did not respond. For Nye County, 77.4 percent either agree or strongly agree, while 6.5 percent disagree and 16.1 percent did not respond. In a related question on preserving wildlife habitat, 92.1 percent statewide either agree or strongly agree; in Planning Region II, 63 percent favor and in Nye County, 64.5 percent favor protecting wildlife habitat.

The Nevada Division of State Parks endorses all of the areas identified by the Bureau as wilderness study areas. In addition, we make the following specific comments of areas recommended by the Bureau in the Tonopah Resource Area and feel that these areas, or parts of them, qualify for wilderness study area designation.

Comment Letter 11

Wilderness Study Area
Page 4

1. Kawich Wilderness Study Area. This area provides challenging terrain, good scenic values, the presence of trails, heavy vegetation cover and the availability of water, all of which contribute to an outstanding opportunity for primitive and unconfined recreation. Supplemental values include an Indian wickiup within the area, and the opportunity for observing wild horses. The Nevada Wild Horse Range (within the Nellis Bombing and Gunnery Range) was established in 1962 and is adjacent to Kawich WSA on the south.

2. Rawhide Mountain Wilderness Study Area. The area includes several brick charcoal kilns, some of which are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, all are in excellent condition. Wilderness should be recommended for recreational values including exploring, photography, visiting historic places, etc., and to maintain the historic setting of Tybo and the kilns.

3. South Reveille Wilderness Study Area. Per the discussion in the Nevada BLM Intensive Wilderness Inventory this WSA includes outstanding opportunities for solitude, primitive and unconfined recreation, diverse scenery and vegetation representative of several Great Basin Province ecosystems, and abundant wildlife. In addition to the supplemental values cited in the inventory, there are ruins of two ghost towns, Old Reveille and New Reveille, adjacent to the WSA on the north; and the Nevada Wild Horse Range is in proximity to the southwest.

4. Palisade Mesa Wilderness Study Area. This WSA contains Lunar Crater, listed on the National Natural Landmark Register, and the Nevada Natural Heritage Inventory. The volcanic and mesa formations are of a unique and natural nature and should definately be included in the recommendation for Wilderness designation. Solitude, recreation and supplemental values are as listed in the BLM Inventory.

5. The Wall Wilderness Study Area. The Wall WSA is adjacent to Palisade Mesa WSA and contains many of the same values. These two areas should both receive a recommendation for Wilderness and could easily receive management as one unit. The only thing separating the two areas is the access road and parking area for Lunar Crater.

11-1 6. Grant Range Wilderness Study Area. This unit is contiguous to the Forest Service Grant Range RARE II proposed wilderness. Since the RARE II area has been administratively endorsed for wilderness, this small area should be also. Recreational, scenic and supplemental values are considered outstanding when included with the RARE II area.

2-38

Response Letter 11

11-1 The Grant Range WSA was removed from further wilderness consideration as a result of a ruling by the Interior Board of Lands Appeals. Each area designated as a WSA was required to possess all of the wilderness characteristics identified in the Wilderness Act of 1964. The Grant Range WSA lacked the acreage needed to meet the 5,000 acre size requirement.

Comment Letter 11

Wilderness Study Area
Page 3

7 & 8. Fandango Wilderness Study Area and Morey Wilderness Study Area. These two areas should be evaluated and managed as one WSA. The areas are included within a Nevada Natural Heritage Landmark area and have been recommended by the Great Basin Review Board for inclusion on the National Natural Landmark Register. The areas contain many outstanding recreational areas and Morey Peak is an enormous volcanic caldera. The Hot Creek Range is an excellent example of a composite range. Vegetation includes ponderosa pine, pinyon-juniper, wet meadows, cold desert sagebrush communities and bristlecone pine. It shows the transgression of east-west Great Basin flora. It contains many relic ecosystems. The scenic grandeur has been described as second only to Wheeler peak. There has been very little overgrazing due to crage and steepness.

9. Blue Eagle Wilderness Study Area. The BLM Intensive Wilderness Inventory identifies the characteristics of naturalness, solitude, primitive and unconfined recreation, and supplemental values. These warrant recommendation as a wilderness area. We can add nothing new.

JL:Mc:Mc:tls

Comment Letter 11

JOSEPH L. GREENLEY
CHAIRMAN

ROBERT LIST
GOVERNOR

1100 VALLEY ROAD P.O. BOX 10678 RENO, NEVADA 89520 TELEPHONE (702) 784-6234

May 4, 1982

Mr. John Spatzel
State Planning Coordinator
State Clearinghouse
Capitol Complex
Carson City, Nevada 89710

Dear John:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for preliminary wilderness recommendations in the Tonopah Resource Area that is administered by the Battle Mountain District of the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (SAI #82000549). As you may recall, our agency provided original recommendations for the wilderness system through the State Planning Coordinator's office in a letter dated June 23, 1980 (re: SAI #80000081). Our agencies position on the general wilderness considerations remains basically unchanged from that expressed during June of 1980.

One major recommended change in the preferred alternatives listed by the BLM is the combining of Morey and Fandango subunits into a single large wilderness unit, an action which may not be in the best interest of wildlife management. The alternative includes a recommendation for road closures in South Six Mile, Big Cow and Little Cow Canyons, all of which provide important and needed access for deer hunters. The South Six Mile Road also provides fishermen access to the only fishable stream on the entire range. A Wilderness designation in this area would not only decrease hunting and fishing opportunities, but would also hamper the Department's ability to effectively control deer population numbers on this important winter range, should such control measures become necessary in the future.

We look forward to working with your office and the appropriate BLM staff relative to the wilderness proposals as the plan progresses. If you have any questions relative to our comments at this time, please feel free to contact this office.

Sincerely,

William A. Molini

William A. Molini
Director

RPM
cc: Region III

Comment Letter 11

STATE OF NEVADA
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF MINERAL RESOURCES

Roland Westergard, Director
Pamela Gene Cooley, Administrator

Capitol Complex
Carson City, Nevada 89710

Address Reply to
Capitol Complex
Nye Bldg., 201 S. Fall Street
Carson City, Nevada 89710
Telephone (702) 885-4262

July 23, 1982

Mr. Leslie A. Monroe
Tonopah Resource Area Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Building 102, Military Circle
P.O. Box 911
Tonopah, Nevada 89049

Dear Mr. Monroe:

With this letter we are sending our comments on the Preliminary Tonopah Environmental Impact Analysis. We appreciate this opportunity to comment on this important precedent setting document--the first BLM Wilderness EIS in Nevada.

11-2 The Division of Mineral Resources has several concerns with the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). One primary concern is the proposal to close and rehabilitate several public roads. Not only will the current users lose access to the area, but including in a wilderness area roaded areas which, by definition, do not qualify as wilderness equates to manufacturing wilderness.

11-3 A second major concern is that the minerals potential assessment was based on a document inappropriate for this use. "Speculative" minerals potential has been treated in practice as "no minerals potential", a clearly erroneous interpretation. Moreover, areas with "good" and "speculative" minerals potential have been included in the Resource Development Alternative and the Preferred Alternative, yet little or no justification is

11-4 given for this tradeoff. Mining is a mainstay of the Nye County economy; the socio-economic impact of reduced minerals exploration and development should be evaluated in greater depth.

Non-wilderness management alternatives for all the multiple resources found in the Tonopah Resource Area have not been properly delineated or compared against the wilderness management alternative. Benefits or negative impacts of wilderness designation should be evaluated thoroughly, quantitatively if possible, and separately for each WSA.

Response Letter 11

11-2 It is not the Bureau's policy to arbitrarily close all roads in or near WSAs. However, in certain circumstances, after careful evaluation, it may become necessary to close roads to adequately manage a designated wilderness area. These types of action will be described in the wilderness management plans developed after Congressional designation. Although road closure and rehabilitation has been analysed in this document under a manageability alternative, it is not anticipated that closures would occur unless proven necessary.

11-3 In the evaluation process used to determine the recommendation of each wilderness study area (WSA), the best available data was used. No new data was provided before the recommendation was made. Without data, potential was unknown. Unknown does not mean known and cannot be assumed to infer potential resources. The Bureau is relying upon the Bureau of Mines and the U.S. Geological Survey to evaluate the WSAs recommended for wilderness designation and this information will be reviewed. If sufficient information is received to warrant a change of recommendation, a supplement will be issued to make that change.

11-4 Please refer to response # 8-8 for the comment from Nye County.

Comment Letter 11

Page 2
July 23, 1982
Wilderness Comments

As a closing comment, the Division has suggested portions of WSA's with "low" minerals potential that may be candidate wilderness areas more acceptable to the mining industry. We do value preserving some public land for future generations and scientific study as long as the mining industry, which is so foundamental to our national defense and progressive economy, can remain healthy to pursue new mineral resources.

Sincerely,

Pamela Gene Conby

Pamela Gene Conby,
Administrator

PGC/kc

cc: Roland Westergard
Governor Robert List
Ed Spang

Comment Letter 11

STATE OF NEVADA
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF MINERAL RESOURCES

Roland Westergard, Director
Pamela Gene Conby, Administrator

Capitol Complex
Nye Bldg., 201 S. Fall Street
Carson City, Nevada 89710

Andrew Keith or
Capitol Complex
Nye Bldg., 201 S. Fall Street
Carson City, Nevada 89710
Telephone (702) 885-4380

COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT TONOPAH PRELIMINARY WILDERNESS RECOMMENDATIONS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

The Draft Tonopah Preliminary Wilderness Recommendations Environmental Impact Statement is an inadequate and in some areas inappropriate evaluation of the impacts wilderness designation will have on the individual wilderness study areas and the region. When evaluating the wilderness study areas' long-term manageability as wilderness, the BLM has deviated from the wilderness policy and Congressional intent, which was to include only those roadless, essentially pristine islands of public land in the National Wilderness Preservation System; instead, the BLM proposes to manufacture additional wilderness by reclaiming any signs of man's past presence including public roads.

The tradeoffs between wilderness and other multiple resources should be based on a consistent well-defined process applied to each WSA individually. Impacts on the traditional land users such as recreationists utilizing motor vehicles for access, minerals exploration, and modern ranching operations were assessed only cursorily. To assess the WSA's minerals potential, the BLM relied on a minerals study prepared by Air Force contractors for the MX Missile System. This report is not appropriate for a wilderness evaluation 1) because it emphasized the valleys, not the ranges where most economically recoverable mineral deposits occur and 2) because the minerals potential weighting system was unduly biased towards past production rather than favorable geologic characteristics. Mining has long been an extremely important part of Nye County's economy yet the socio-economic affects of restricted minerals exploration has not been adequately addressed. Sufficient potential wilderness exists in low minerals potential areas to satisfy the diversity requirements for important ecosystem representatives, sufficient wilderness to meet the major population center demand, and a balanced geographical distribution in which Nevada would have its "fair share" of wilderness. Therefore, only areas with low minerals potential should be proposed in the Preferred Alternative.

Adequacy of Minerals Potential Assessment

11-5 The Tonopah Resource Area Minerals Assessment was based entirely on two reports prepared by Ertec Western, Inc. and its predecessor, Fugro National, Inc., for the MX missile system Nevada/Utah siting area. While these two reports are a useful summary of much of the geologic and mineral-related literature and maps for the Tonopah Resource Area, they are an incomplete, inadequate, and in-

Comment Letter 11

appropriate basis on which to judge the Tonopah Resource Area's minerals potential. One basic shortcoming of using the MX mining study for other purposes is that the Air Force directed their contractor, Ertec/Fugro, to assess only the valleys where the Air Force could deploy the missile system. The mountain ranges, where most of the hard rock mining takes place, were assessed only peripherally as they provided evidence for mineralized areas occurring in the valleys.

To further compound the problem, the Air Force's scope of work for the AIM, Inc./Warren Woodward mining claim study specifically excluded the mountain ranges. At the Air Force's direction, Ertec/Fugro incorporated the AIM report into their own report; thus many important mining claims are not identified or assessed in the Ertec/Fugro report. Because recently instituted changes in annual reporting requirements have weeded out the mining claims least likely to be developed, the claims should be considered evidence of active exploration. The BLM has current mining claim records readily available in their own files and should incorporate this data into the FEIS, not wait for the USGS study. The large number of active Tonopah Resource Area mining claims represents the high continuing interest in this area's minerals potential. For instance, the Moray Peak and Fandango areas contain nearly 100 mining claims. More than 90 mining claims were located in the South Reveille area, and over 100 mining claims are in the Blue Eagle WSA. Significant numbers of mining claims may also exist in the Kawich, Reshlide, and Palisade Mesa WSA's; the BLM records do not indicate any mining claims in the Nail WSA.

11-6

11-7 Another critical problem with the Ertec/Fugro reports is that minerals potential was based almost entirely on past production with little weight given to present exploration activity or favorable geologic parameters. Attachment 1 lists Ertec/Fugro's weighting system. Strictly geologic parameters, such as mineral belts, are given a "1" weighting, while past production weights vary from "2" to "4". Thus it was necessary for an area to have had some production or many favorable geologic parameters to be classified as "high" or "good". Had this study been conducted a few years previously, several of the recently discovered and developed Carlin-type gold deposits would have been classified as "speculative" since no past production had occurred in the area.

Ertec/Fugro defines "speculative" potential as "areas with favorable geologic parameters and inferences based on geologic models and analogies with known favorable environments."[1] Ertec/Fugro classified fifty to sixty percent of the MX siting region valley area as having "speculative" potential, that is favorable geologic parameters were present although no past production had occurred. In the BLM's

1. Fugro National, Inc., MX Minerals Resources Survey, Nevada/Utah Siting Area, 1981, Page 17.

11-7

11-5 It may be interesting to note that other's agree with you concerning the Pagto report as being "incomplete, inadequate, and inappropriate". However, this was not the only data reviewed in making determinations of suitability for wilderness areas. District files were reviewed along with other information available from district specialists.

Response Letter 11

11-6 Current numbers of mining claims were used. A map showing the number and location is included in the document. You may note that the ratio of developments per mining claim is very low. To use this as a determining factor may lower the values even further.

11-7 Present exploration activities fluctuate rapidly and are difficult to track. Areas with high exploration yesterday (even last year) may have no activity or interest today.

Speculative areas were not considered as areas of no potential, however, "speculative" means "uncertain" and that means there is no certainty of any economic potential there. It cannot be assumed that potential is higher than it is.

Page 3
Wilderness Comments

Geology-Energy-Minerals (GEM) environmental assessment guidelines, the BLM staff are directed to "identify geologic environments considered to be favorable for the presence (or formation) of different types of mineral deposits." These guidelines seem to indicate that the BLM is to identify and consider impacts on areas with favorable geology, or "speculative" areas according to Kitec/Fugro's classification. The Division of Mineral Resources supports this approach since much of the current exploration activity occurs outside of known mining districts.

The impacts of restricted mineral exploration, foreclosure of claim staking, and prohibited development of claims not currently existing may not become evident in the "speculative" areas as soon as in "high" or "good" areas; however, the impact on Nye County's long-term minerals development could be significant in ten years or more. By its very definition, the reaource development alternative should only classify as suitable for wilderness those areas with "low" minerals potential, that is, sufficient data exists to state that given today's technology, minerals development is unlikely. Since such exploration is concentrated in the "speculative" areas, the Tonopah Wilderness Environmental Impact Statement Preferred Alternative should also exclude all "high", "good", and "speculative" minerals potential areas from the proposed wilderness areas. A decision to include an area with minerals potential (either "high", "good", or "speculative") in the Preferred Alternative should be justified clearly by heavily counterbalancing data in the FEIS.

11-8 The authors could also improve the mineral resources maps in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. First, a consistent color scheme should be used to depict the "high", "good", "low", and "speculative" potential. Now the color scheme varies and is misleading; a dark area may mark high minerals potential on one map and low minerals potential on another. Secondly, maps should be prepared depicting the minerals potential other than the base, ferrous, and precious metals, namely industrial and nonmetallic minerals, uranium, oil and gas, and geothermal potential. The general discussion on pages 3-7 to 3-13 and in the Minerals Technical Report is inadequate to locate the promising areas, particularly since many of the geographic features referenced (e.g. Hot Creek Valley,) do not appear on the Minerals Resources map. Maps would be particularly helpful when deciding to delete portions of a WSA from a wilderness recommendation.

Other current mineral resource data is available from the Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology and mining companies active in the area; this data should be incorporated into the Final EIS. Attachment 2 is copies of the Wilderness Study Area maps with some additional information obtained by the Division of Mineral Resources from industry contacts and the Bureau of Mines and Geology. Most notably, the Kawich, Pandamo, and Morey Peak areas have all been sites of considerable recent minerals exploration activity. Several mineralized areas and new claims are depicted on the maps. Existing mines, drill sites, or roads not identified in the DEIS are also depicted in the South Reveille, Rawhide Mountain, Blue Eagle, and the Wall WSA's. No specific comments are given on the Grant Range since this area was deleted from the wilderness inventory on April

11-8 This overright has been corrected. Please refer to the Mineral Potential Maps at the end of Chapter Three in this document.

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We do understand that the U.S. Geological Survey or Bureau of Mines will conduct a more detailed minerals assessment for the BLM State Director's evaluation prior to submission to the Administration. This study should incorporate adequate field work to reevaluate conflicting data and fill in data gaps for areas little explored to date. However, this study must receive adequate funding and time to be completed properly. Furthermore, even though this data will be developed subsequent to the preliminary wilderness recommendations, the wilderness decision makers must carefully weigh the new mineral data against the area's wilderness resources to fairly evaluate foregone mineral development opportunities. Finally, because continued interim management as wilderness study areas seriously hinders minerals exploration and development, and since the momentum for a proposed wilderness area increases with each decision point, all currently available minerals data should be incorporated into the Final EIS and evaluated. Thus, all WSA's or portions of WSA's with minerals potential can be returned to multiple use prior to the USGS field study.

Minerals Exploration Restrictions

Perhaps the most alarming facet of wilderness designation from the mining industry's point of view is that the decision makers must choose whether or not to foreclose permanently minerals development in a wilderness area without knowing the actual mineral resource values. Unlike range or wildlife resources, no one knows the exact extend and value of a mineral deposit until the entire deposit has been mined out.

The wilderness management policy does call for recurring federal government mineral resource assessments and continued, although severely restricted, private sector exploration, as well as emergency release should a mineral deposit be needed for a national emergency. Even though these provisions could be helpful, they provide little solace to the mining industry since in reality if the mineral potential of an area is not known before a wilderness designation, it will most likely never be known. A mining geologist's knowledge of an area's mineral potential and the geologic structures which signal a potential mineral deposit are continually expanding with time. Information concerning a new known deposit's geologic setting, or a mineral exploration or processing technological breakthrough may transform an area once passed over into a prime mineral target. The major recent disseminated gold deposit discoveries in Nevada were not considered to be economically recoverable deposits just a few years ago. Most of the major barite mines currently under development in Nevada occur in a mineral belt once thought not to contain host rocks for barite deposits.

A recent General Accounting Office report entitled "Mineral Data In the Forest Service's Roadless Area Review and Evaluation (RARE II) Is Misleading and Should Be Corrected," the GAO describes an instance in Region 1 where one study area was rated as zero minerals potential because there was no lease activity or data indicating favorable geologic structures; even so, significant oil and gas lease activity occurred subsequent to the RARE II study completion. A

Forest Service geologist told the GAO that "there were many areas in which little is known and exploration of some form would be necessary to provide proper evaluation of the mineral potential."

The evolutionary process of minerals exploration also takes time. At least five to ten years of extensive exploration may be required to evaluate an exploration target area before development can commence. Because the exploration process is also risky and expensive, few mining companies, if any, will continue to explore designated wilderness areas without the insurance that a staked mining claim would provide.

No doubt the recurring government surveys will provide additional geologic data; none the less, exploration is more appropriately carried out by the private sector than by public tax dollars. In addition, the government geologists must be "jacks of all trades" whereas private sector exploration geologists often specialize in a single commodity and are thus able to recognize occurrences of these commodities more readily than a generalist. The severe curtailing of private sector exploration, the expected limited effectiveness of government-funded exploration, and long lead time prior to development all add to the probability that when and if national emergencies occur, we will not be able to look to the wilderness areas for additional mineral supplies. Their minerals potential will still be unknown.

The issue of restricted minerals exploration has been discussed before when the wilderness program was "initiated". It is discussed here to remind the decision makers that they are effectively foreclosing the wilderness areas from future minerals exploration and development, a decision not to be made lightly. As stated previously, overwhelming justifications should exist before designating as wilderness an area with "high", "good", or "speculative" minerals potential.

Economic Impact

11-9 The Draft Environmental Impact Statement grossly understates the potential adverse effects wilderness designation could have on Nye County's economic growth. 13.7 percent of Nye County's total assessed value was related to mining in FY 1980/81.* As shown in Attachment 1, 43 percent** of the county's resident payroll and 42 percent** of the residents' jobs are directly or indirectly related to the Mining Industry. Only 3.6 percent** of the resident county payroll and 7.6 percent** of total resident jobs are directly or indirectly related to the hotel, gaming, and recreation industries. Although wilderness visitation would probably increase as a result of wilderness designation, the increase would be more than offset by the reduced number of visitors who formerly visited the area

* Source: Division of Assessment Standards, Nevada Department of Taxation

** Note: These figures do not include estimated non-resident employment, which is 2/3 of Nevada Test Site employment and an additional 70 mining employees who commute from California.

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using a vehicle for camping, hunting, fishing, etc. Just as Clark County's gaming industry is by far the most important basic industry, mining and federal government are the mainstays of Nye County's economy. Any significant reduction in the area available for minerals exploration and development could have a severe long-term impact on the County's economy. The final EIS should assess this potentially large negative impact in greater detail.

Manageability Alternative

The Division of Mineral Resources has several concerns regarding the Tonopah BLM staff's application of the wilderness manageability criterion. The DEIS manageability alternative emphasizes the "enhancement of manageability of the wilderness study areas as wilderness over the long term period" (emphasis added). The Tonopah Resource Area Management Framework Plan Wilderness Amendment planning criteria contains two questions under manageability:

1) "What is the nature and significance of the known potential resource values and uses of each wilderness study area?"

2) "What characteristics of each wilderness study area tend to make it suitable or unsuitable to be managed as wilderness in perpetuity?"

These questions in conjunction with the BLM wilderness study policy, suggest that the BLM should evaluate whether or not each proposed wilderness area can be managed as it is rather than ways to enhance a wilderness. Would different sections of the wilderness area be managed best for specific primary uses such as protected, undisturbed wildlife habitat or primitive camping?

The BLM Wilderness study policy recognizes that existing non-conforming private rights and uses permitted under the Wilderness Act may hamper perpetual wilderness management. In reference to non-conforming uses, the wilderness study policy states,

> "To satisfy this criterion, BLM must be reasonably certain that that area can be managed as wilderness over the long run, based on present knowledge of the resources and private rights in the area, and recognizing congressional intent regarding allowed uses. On the other hand, if the allowed uses are reasonably certain to destroy the wilderness character of the area on (sic) a significant portion of it, then the BLM would conclude that the effected portion can not be managed as wilderness."*

11-10 To implement this manageability analysis, the correct approach would seem to be: 1) Evaluate whether or not the area can be managed as wilderness as is with the activity restrictions specified in the Wilderness Management Policy, and 2) Delete those wilderness study

* 47 FR 5108

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areas or portions cannot be managed in perpetuity as wilderness. Instead, the BLM staff evaluated cursorily the proposed wilderness areas, and suggests adding nonsuitable land and obliterating signs of man's past presence in order to protect each proposed area. These land addition and restoration proposals equate to manufacturing wilderness.

One manageability approach employed by the BLM staff was to consider more logical management configurations based on topography. The basic idea is good, but in most cases this meant that the valleys were deleted from the proposed wilderness and only the mountain regions were left in. From a mineral industry standpoint, this is a most inequitable decision since the economically recoverable non-energy mineral resources are concentrated in the mountain ranges.

11-11 In two WSA's, the Kawich and Blue Eagle, additional acreage was added to the wilderness areas to make them more manageable. The Division of Mineral Resources strongly objects to this proposal since these two particular areas were disqualified as unsuitable for wilderness areas during the wilderness inventory phase. Both areas are not in pristine condition due to the presence of several roads and possibly other features.

Perhaps the most objectionable proposal in the entire wilderness DEIS is to close, rip out, and rehabilitate the roads in these two added sections as well as many other cherrystemed roads. Our comments on this precedent setting proposal are discussed in detail below in the Road Closing section.

11-12 Another example where the Manageability analysis was lacking involved the Howe Canyon private inholdings in the Kawich WSA. First, the DEIS fails to discuss the extent to which the inholdings would decrease wilderness manageability. Also missing are clear decision criteria to determine whether or not acquisition would be justified. Finally, the DEIS doesn't evaluate the manageability impacts likely if the landowners do not agree to sell their lands to the federal government.

One final manageability requirement which the EIS should consider is the feasibility and cost of enforcing the various wilderness activity restrictions over such a large land area if the proposed WSA's are designated. The cost effectiveness of the additional "protection" wilderness would provide should be compared against the "protection" provided by the existing management framework plan.

Road Closings

11-13 As mentioned above, the DEIS preferred alternative recommends closing and rehabilitating several cherrystemmed roads. Closing a public right-of-way for wilderness improvement is a deplorable precedent. Section 603.(a) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act o 1976 (FLPMA) directs the Secretary of Interior to "review those roadless areas of five thousand acres or more and roadless islands of the public lands, identified during the inventory . . . as having wilderness characteristics..." (emphasis added). Thus by definition, roaded areas are excluded from this wilderness review.

11-9 Please see response to Nye County, FB-8.

11-10 There are two important points that need to be address:

(1) The proposed action in this final EIS is not the same as the preferred alternative which was presented in the draft EIS.

(2) The Wilderness Act of 1964 does not preclude the closing of cherrystem roads. This action was not to "create" wilderness, but rather to enhance wilderness values already in existence. Decisions on roadless areas have been challenged in Interior Board of Lands Appeals (IBLA) actions. At least two of these are directly related to the Tonopah Resource Area: IBLA 81-540, Walter Benoit (3/01/82) and IBLA 81-541, 81-1095, State of Nevada etal (3/01/82). Both decisions upheld the Bureau's process of cherry-stemming and the evaluation of such areas during the study process.

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11-11 This has now been addressed in the EIS. Please refer to Chapters Two and Four of this document.

11-12 This will be spelled out in the wilderness management plan, after the WSAs have been designated as wilderness.

Off-road vehicle (ORV) use was analyzed as an issue in the final EIS.

11-13 The impacts to grazing facility maintenance and construction were analyzed as an issue in the final EIS.

Following a lengthy debate concerning the difference between a road and a way, Congress; (in H.R. Rep. No. 94-1163, 94th Congress, Second Session, 17 (1976)) defined "roadless" as "the absence of roads which have been improved and maintained by mechanical means to ensure relatively regular and continuous use. A way maintained solely by the passage of vehicles does not constitute a road." "Mechanical Means" is defined in the BLM Wilderness Inventory handbook, issued September 27, 1978, as the "use of hand or power machinery or tools". Therefore, using a hand shovel would differentiate a road from a way. It is these roads that are, by definition, to be excluded from wilderness areas. To isolate potential wilderness areas from roads and other intrusions that would otherwise deem all or portions of the area nonsuitable for wilderness, the BLM applied the cherrystemming principle. In a recent Interior Board of Land Appeals decision (IBLA 80-274, National Outdoor Coalition), the Board upheld the cherrystemming process as the only practical method known to the Board to exclude roads or other intrusions from wilderness areas. Furthermore, Congress has approved in the past several wilderness area recommendations containing cherrystemmed roads. Therefore, past precedents argue for cherrystemming intruding roads rather than destroying the roads. Areas with more than a few minor intruding cherrystemmed roads do not qualify as wilderness in the first place.

11-14 The data presented in the DEIS fail to substantiate clear, measurable benefits that the road closings would have. Moreover, potentially affected current users are not adequately identified or considered. In the case of South Six Mile Canyon Road, the DEIS authors mention repeatedly the benefits to the watershed and fisheries that the road closing would have. Along this road are located several mining claims including two in T.8N., R.10E., and several in T.9N., R.10E. The South Six Mile Canyon Road may also provide access to numerous other claims further from the road. In addition, hunters, fisherman, campers and others use this road heavily for recreation purposes. A log book at the road's beginning lists the large number and wide variety of its visitors. Because vehicular access to the stream and claims is not possible by alternate routes, the BLM should consider other alternatives to closing the road. A primary alternative would be to improve the road by reducing the number of stream crossings and installing culverts and other improvements to protect the aquatic environment; closing the road is not the only alternative, even though it is the only alternative BLM considered.

Restricted Public Access

The road closing issue is closely related to the restricted public access issue. In his testimony at the Reno Public Hearing on the Tonopah Wilderness DEIS, one wilderness advocate stated that most of the traditional uses of these public lands would be preserved. This is not the case. Most notably, restrictions or pre-emption could occur for mineral exploration and development, cultural resources exploration and protection, recreational uses by motorized vehicles, traditional ranching operating procedures, wildlife habitat manipulation, private land access, and recreational access for handicapped persons. These public land users as a group comprise the activities of the majority of Tonopah Resource Area public

land users.

The DEIS describes wilderness as a recreational opportunity, and, indeed, the amount of recreation-related foot traffic may increase in areas designated as wilderness. Of equal or greater concern, is how wilderness designation would affect the traditional recreational visitors. The DEIS on page 3-7 states that "Virtually all forms of recreation involve a vehicle, either for access to recreation sites or simply for the pleasure of operating the vehicle." In

11-15 the impact sections, however, the DEIS only states that off-road vehicle (ORV) use would be prohibited. The text should also identify the number of persons affected as well as the impacts to the likely alternative sites which the current ORV and motor vehicle access recreationists would visit.

Another area of concern is how visitor use would be managed. This simple assumption on page 4-1 could lead to severely restricting public access of any type. Details should be given regarding the

11-16 nature of any controls, how many visitors would be allowed at any time, and how the visitor management program would be enforced.

Multiple Resource Evaluation

A basic objective of the BLM wilderness studies is to "ensure that wilderness recommendations resulting from multiple-use plans are based on consideration of the multiple resource values of the public lands." Later in the BLM wilderness study policy, the authors state that "The wilderness study policy and planning criteria specify factors and quality standards to be addressed through the planning process in determining whether the area is more suitable for wilderness designation or more suitable for other uses."

11-17 To make this evaluation, the BLM must consider how each resource could best be managed. Since a management framework plan was already developed for the Tonopah area, the appropriate comparison for each resource would be the long and short-term outlook under wilderness management versus the existing management framework plan. For some resources and users, wilderness protection would improve their long-term outlook; for other resources and users, the improvement would be negligible, decrease, or actually be lost. Either way, the expected impacts should be evaluated thoroughly, quantitatively if possible, and separately for each MUA.

11-18 To compound the thinness of the DEIS's Environmental Consequences section, the discussion of existing conditions and long-term expectations for each resource is also inadequate. For example, the DEIS does not discuss the number of ORV users who visit each area for camping, fishing, hunting, etc. These recreational visitors could go elsewhere, as the DEIS suggests; however the alternative locations are not identified nor are the probable impacts on these other locations discussed. Loss of these recreation opportunities could also have long-term social impacts for the area residents. Some wilderness-related recreational uses may increase, yet the offsetting socio-economic impacts for the local and regional residents and economy are not evaluated.

11-14 This has been analyzed in the final EIS for each WSA where it was determined impacts could occur.

11-15 The impact of ORV use within the WSAs has been analyzed as an issue in the final EIS.

11-16 These concerns will be addressed in the wilderness management plan for each WSA after designation. These plans will be specific to the management needs for the wilderness area in question.

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11-17 This issue has been further defined as impacts to mule deer population, and has been analyzed in the final EIS.

11-18 The process, as you suggest, was followed throughout the study phase. All of the factors which you list here were considered in making recommendations on wilderness suitability. All areas of known high potential for metallic minerals were eliminated, wilderness values were weighed against other resource values which may be lost after designation and these were evaluated on a WSA by WSA basis.

11-19 With regards to cultural resources, the DEIS states simply that although not much is known about the area's historical, archeological, and paleontological resources, "a general benefit would occur from the added resource protection wilderness designation would provide." This is not necessarily true. Some resources would benefit from the decreased number of visitors and vandalism opportunities. Other historical structures would require protection and reconstruction to be maintained over time; otherwise these resources would slowly degrade. Designation as a National Historic Site would provide the same protection whether or not the area was designated as wilderness. Without a more clear and substantiated discussion on cultural resources, it can not be stated that wilderness designation would significantly increase long-term cultural resources protection.

11-20 Although the DEIS identifies existing and planned ranching improvements, the document only mentions a potential economic impact to ranchers. The net impact to the local livestock industry and individual operators may be extremely expensive. For instance, if motorized vehicles can no longer be used for ranch operations, the increased labor costs could be extremely high, so high that some ranches might no longer be profitable. This potential impact should be considered in greater detail.

11-21 Another multiple use consideration is watershed protection. In the Tonopah Grazing Environmental Impact Statement, the discussion of watershed erosion indicates that no area within the Tonopah Resource Area had erosion rates greater than the SCS (Soil Conservation Service) limits of 3 to 5 tons per acre per year. In addition, the Grazing EIS states that all three grazing alternatives would have insignificantly different effects on erosion potential. Where are the seven areas with high erosion potential that are referenced in the wilderness DEIS? What are the erosion rates in these areas? How much would these erosion rates be reduced by wilderness designation? Would this reduction be significant?

11-22 Similarly, the discussion of wildlife and wildlife habitat impact is totally qualitative and inadequate to compare the various alternatives. It is not clear from the DEIS that the increased protection wilderness designation could provide would be significant. Furthermore, the probable effects on mule deer and other species from canceling planned habitat manipulation projects should be discussed in a more quantitative format. Significant impacts on specific species or populations should also be mentioned.

Tradeoffs Between Resources

The BLM decisions on whether or not to recommend an area for wilderness designation seem inconsistent and arbitrary. Sometimes areas with good minerals potential are deleted from the wilderness recommendations; oftentimes, most of the good potential area is included in the wilderness designations. Other resources are similarly affected. No rationale is given for these inconsistent tradeoffs nor do the wilderness characteristics for the wilderness areas recommended always seem significantly more suitable than the areas not

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recommended for designation. Six of the eight remaining wilderness study areas in the Tonopah Resource Area contain sections with "high" or "good" minerals potential as shown in Attachment 4. A seventh area, the Fandango WSA, contains 60% speculative potential.

One would expect that the outlines of the preferred alternatives would avoid the "high", "good", and "speculative" minerals potential areas. Even if one were to interpret incorrectly "speculative" minerals potential as "low" potential, one would still expect that no "high" or "good" minerals potential areas would be included in the final recommendations. This is not the case. Five of the six recommended wilderness areas in the preferred alternative contain "good" or "speculative" minerals potential; three of the five contain areas with "good" potential. Morey Peak, in fact, contains 28% "good" and 45% "speculative" potential as outlined in the preferred alternative. Clearly, the Morey Peak WSA should not have been recommended as a wilderness area in the preferred alternative.

Even when the resource development alternative was developed, minerals potential was not properly considered. Five of the seven wilderness areas with minerals potential were deleted; however portions of the Blue Eagle and Palisade Mesa WSA's still contain "good" or "speculative" minerals potential within the boundaries of the resource development alternative. This seems to be in violation of the resource development alternative definition. Only those portions of the WSA with "low" minerals potential should have been included.

To correct the deficiencies in the multiple resource tradeoff process, the BLM staff should 1) avoid all areas containing "good" or "high" minerals potential, 2) avoid areas with "speculative" potential whenever possible, overriding justifications for wilderness designation do not exist, 3) develop a clear, objective basis for the tradeoffs between resources, and 4) evaluate the multiple resources tradeoffs on a WSA specific basis. Whenever possible, the comparison should
11-23 be quantitative; the specific methodology utilized should always be fully documented as the wilderness study policy requires.

Diversity

Nevada appears to have a disproportionate amount of the designated, administratively endorsed wilderness areas, and/or areas under study for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System. As of June 5, 1982, slightly over 8 million acres of Nevada were in some stage of wilderness review and designation, including 84,830 acres designated by the U.S. Forest Service in Jarbidge and 5,990,049 acres within the BLM WSA's. The 8 million acres is 11.3 percent of the state's total land area, an extremely high percent of the state to be foreclosed from multiple resource use; 3.9 million acres of Nevada (or nearly 6 percent) have already been withdrawn for national defense purposes. This is about 13 percent of all U.S. lands devoted to defense. Withdrawing Nevada lands from minerals exploration and development is also particularly onerous since Nevada is one of the most heavily mineralized states in the Union. (See Attachment 5)

11-19 Cultural resources was not analyzed as an issue in the final EIS. It was determined that the sites which occur within the WSAs are primarily lithic scatters, rock walls, and some Historic mining sites which are not of National Register quality. The Tybo Charcoal kilns are the only site on the National Register currently. Wilderness designation, as you suggest, could add some protection for historic sites by reducing vandalism through restricted access to these areas.

11-20 It is not anticipated that range maintenance activities would be impacted significantly. The wilderness management policy allows for continued use with reasonable constraints. Please refer to the analysis of grazing facility maintenance and construction in Chapter Four of this final EIS.

11-21 The high erosion potential watersheds are shown on the Domestic Livestock and Watershed Maps. There is only one area which has been determined as having some possible impact from future development with nondesignation of wilderness. This is discussed in the Chapter Four analysis for the South Reveille WSA in the final EIS. All others were determined to have no anticipated impact from designation or nondesignation of wilderness.

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11-22 This is now analyzed under impacts to mule deer populations for each WSA where it was determined to be an impact.

11-23 These considerations were covered in the inventory and study phases. A more complete analysis of potential mineral impacts has been done for each WSA in the final EIS. Please refer to Chapter Four for analysis of impacts.

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The BLM wilderness study policy prescribes that the BLM shall evaluate whether each proposed WSA adds to the National Wilderness Preservation System's diversity. This evaluation is based on three factors: 1) a variety of ecosystems and land forms, 2) opportunities for the wilderness experience within a day's driving time (5 hours) of a major population centers (of 100,000 or more) and 3) a balanced geographic distribution of wilderness areas. The Tonopah Resource Area has two basic types of ecosystems: the Great Basin Sagebrush ecosystem and the Pinyon-Juniper Woodland. One example of each ecosystem type within a day's drive of Las Vegas should be sufficient to satisfy the ecosystem diversity criterion.

No other examples of the Pinyon-Juniper Woodland are currently represented in the National Wilderness Preservation System (NWPS); however, 14 areas totalling 535,500 acres have been administratively endorsed. These 14 areas should be identified on a map to show their location and relative distance from the Las Vegas SMSA. Similarly, the Great Basin Sagebrush ecosystem is represented by one designated area in California and 8 wilderness areas which have been administratively endorsed. These areas should also be indicated on a map to show their relative distance from the Las Vegas area. Without these maps it is difficult to put in proper perspective the other wilderness area. For instance, stating that another example of the Great Basin Sagebrush ecosystem is located in California has little meaning; the area could be in Southern California along the Nevada border, along the coast, or in extreme Northern California. All these locations would have very different implications for wilderness diversity in Nevada.

In order to balance wilderness geographic distribution, one allocation factor could be to establish a percent of the National Wilderness Preservation System in each state that is roughly equal to that state's percentage of the total land area. Nevada comprises 3.6% of the lower 48 state's total land area. In contrast, 9.7% of the wilderness already designated or under consideration in the lower 48 states is in Nevada; this is nearly 3 times Nevada's "fair share" of wilderness area. If the percent of wilderness allocated to each state is adjusted for relative population concentrations, Nevada's "fair share" would be even less.

Another allocation factor could be demand. The Bureau of Land Management reports that for Federal Fiscal Year 1980, 5.2 of the recreation visitor days on BLM-administered land in the lower 48 states were in Nevada. Even considering that a disproportionate percentage of the BLM-administered land is within Nevada's borders, the amount of wilderness designated or under consideration in Nevada still appears to be considerably greater than the demand.

For comparison, we calculated what Nevada's "fair share" of wilderness might be. We assumed that the already designated wilderness would remain designated, that 2/3 of the administratively endorsed wilderness proposals would receive Congressional approval, and that 1/3 of the wilderness study areas under study under various federal agencies would actually be designated. On this basis 50.2 million

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of the 82.7 million acres of wilderness already designated or under consideration in the lower 48 states will eventually belong to the National Wilderness Preservation System. Nevada's "fair share", or 3.6% of the NWPS would be 1.8 million acres. Given that 64,830 acres have already been designated as wilderness in Nevada, and assuming that 2/3 of the 2.2 million acres awaiting Congressional approval will actually be approved, then only 267,000 acres of wilderness would be left to designate in Nevada. This is about half of the wilderness areas under study in the Tonopah Resource Area and only 5% of the total BLM wilderness study area acreage in Nevada.

In order to assure that all of the state's multiple resources are considered and that only the prime wilderness areas are designated, the BLM should take the additional step of overviewing the wilderness proposals in all the BLM districts at one time once the background resource data has been collected and analyzed. From this overview position, the BLM can ascertain that the best example of Pinyon-Juniper Woodland is designated rather than a less desirable example which happened to come up earlier in the wilderness review process. In addition, the BLM will also be able to distribute evenly opportunities for solitude near major population centers and balance the geographic distribution of the wilderness areas. The outcome should be a higher quality, more easily managed National Wilderness Preservation System that has minimal conflicts with other multiple uses of the public lands.

AREAS SUITABLE FOR WILDERNESS DESIGNATION

The Division of Mineral Resources supports the basic objective of the National Wilderness Preservation System, that is to preserve some sections of the country in nearly pristine condition for future scientific study and for the benefit of future generations. The difficult questions are: How much total wilderness should be designated? Where should it be located?

As discussed earlier in these comments, the mineral industry hesitates to approve any recommended WSA as suitable for wilderness because an area's minerals potential can never be known accurately until actual mining occurs. We know that many of the major mineral discoveries were made in areas written off as having no potential by all the expert geologists except for one or perhaps for a single determined prospector. A new technological breakthrough or a shift in industrial new materials can suddenly transform an area with no potential to a prime exploration target.

The question still remains: Where should wilderness areas be designated? From the viewpoint of mineral resources, the safest recommendation would be to locate wilderness in areas with low mineral potential, that is areas with sufficient geologic data to indicate the lack of favorable host rocks or minerals given today's mining technology and economics. Within the Tonopah Resource Area, six of the eight wilderness study areas contain low minerals potential areas. Low minerals potential is found in all of the Wall WSA, the eastern 40% of the Palisade Mesa WSA, a strip along the southwest corner of the South Reevsville WSA, a band through the center of the

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Pandango and Morey Peak WSA's (although the roads separating the two should remain open), and the northeast corner of the Blue Eagle WSA, although this area may be too small to qualify. The USGS or Bureau of Mines studies will still be needed to confirm the low minerals potential of these areas.

Attachment 6 is a table with rough estimates of the land area suitable for wilderness if only low minerals potential areas are included. This would be a preferable resource development alternative. The estimated total available acreage is 113,000 acres, excluding the Blue Eagle WSA which is too small. This is more than sufficient acreage to satisfy the wilderness diversity criteria.

Hopefully the question of designating speculative minerals potential areas as wilderness will never arise as long as sufficient land with low minerals potential is available. Nonetheless, should the question arise, evaluating the speculative areas is considerably more problematic. These areas contain favorable geologic characteristics for minerals deposits. As directed by the Geology-Energy-Mineral (GEM) guidelines, the BLM is to consider these areas as having minerals potential; indeed much of the current exploration and recent discoveries in Nevada have occurred in these speculative areas. If areas with speculative minerals potential are to be included in a wilderness area recommendation, it should be only because 1) there are no alternative sites with low minerals potential, 2) no other example of the dominant ecosystem type is suitable for wilderness and located within a day's drive of the same population center, and 3) an intensive USGS or Bureau of Mines study has been conducted at a sufficient level of detail to reclassify the area as having low potential rather than high or good potential.

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MINERALS POTENTIAL WEIGHTING PARAMETERS

PARAMETER	WEIGHT
Volcanic Center	1
Volcanic Caldera Perimeter Area	1
Granitic Intrusive	1
Metal Occurrence not included in a Mining District (from Larson and others, 1977)	1
Positive Aeromagnetic Anomaly (≤10,900 gammas)	1
High Positive Aeromagnetic Anomaly (>11,000 gammas; > 11,200 gammas in SW mafic volcanic area, Goldfield 2° Quadrangle)	2
Industry Discovery or Active Exploration	1
Mineral Belt	1
Mining District (area of influence: 40 square kilometers)	
Past Production (in millions of dollars)	
Less than 1	2
1 to 10	3
10 to 100	4
100 to 1000	5
Greater than 1000	6

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PARAMETERS CONSIDERED IN ASSIGNING BASE - FERROUS - AND PRECIOUS-METAL POTENTIAL TO THE MX MINERAL RESOURCES SURVEY STUDY AREA

MX SITING INVESTIGATION — TABLE 5-4

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE – OHIO

URS/DRD NATIONAL, INC.

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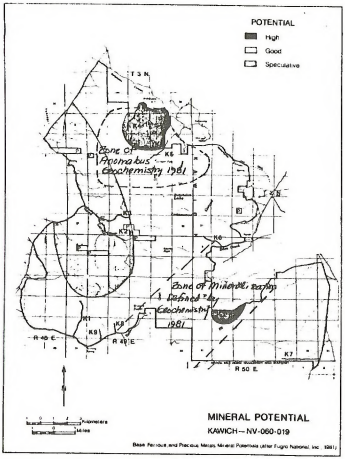

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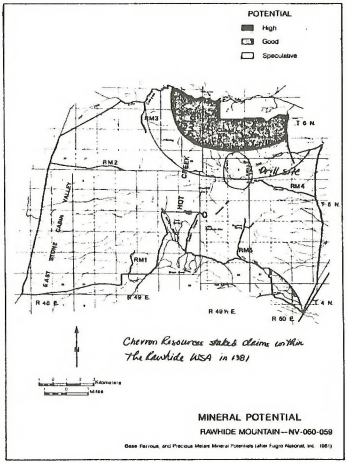

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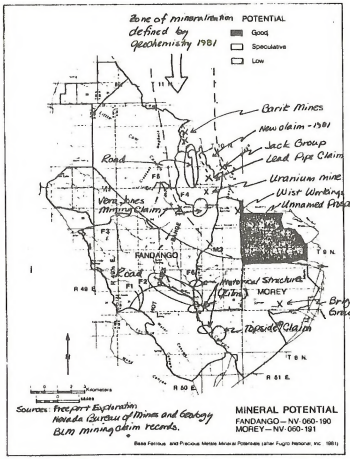

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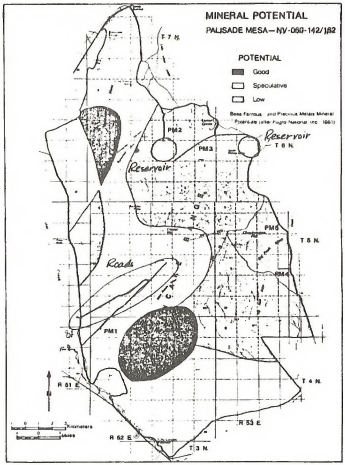

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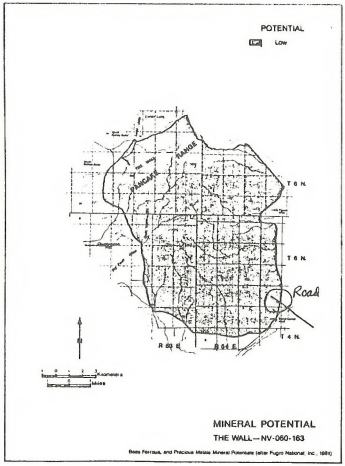

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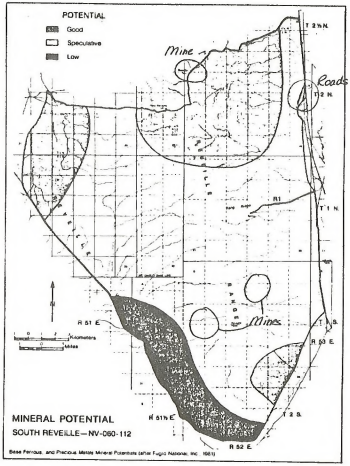

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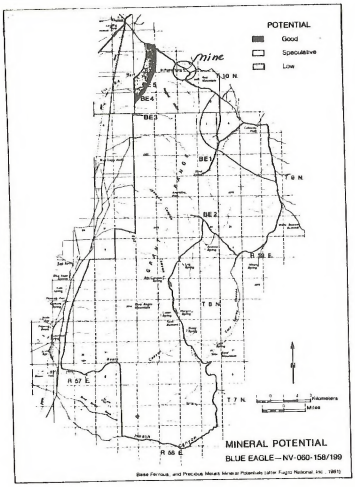

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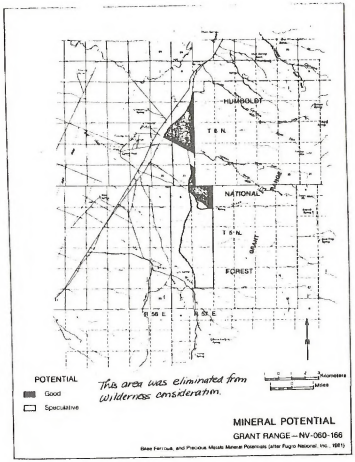


Comment Letter 11

ATTACHMENT 3

NYE COUNTY EMPLOYMENT-1981

1 Project Basic Industries	Direct Payroll	Direct Employment	Multiplier	Multiplied Payroll	Multiplied Employment	Payroll Per Employee	Employment Per Thousand
Mining	233,249,000	35.4	2.231	24.5	1.731	$43,448,000	42.7	2175	43.9
Mining Processing Without Beneficiation	2,382,000	3.4	.96	1.7	1.302	2,277,000	2.0	128	2.5
Gambling, and Recreation[2]	3,000,000	1.0	.38	1.1	.380	3,000,000	1.0	38	1.0
Nevada Test Site[3] Without	39,956,000	31.8	1.451	27.2	1.774	57,457,000	51.4	2,933	48.2
Total Direct	277,590,000	43.2	3.074	55.3					
Total Indirect	74,187,000	26.7	2.116	45.7					
Total	4	111,277,000	186.6	3,198	186.0		$111,577,000		3,190

1 Based on average county payroll multiplier of 1.234
2 Assumes 75% hotel-motel payroll and 25% in labor
3 Based on Nevada Test Site payroll in Nye County, 2/3 commute from Las Vegas
4 Assumes 70 Nevada Test Site Employees live in County housing employees in California

NYE COUNTY-1981
TOTAL EMPLOYMENT

	Total Employment		Without Commuting Nevada Test Site Employees
Payroll	$187,772,000		$111,577,000
Employees	3,198		2,190

* Also excludes 70 Nevada Test Site employees who commute from California

Source: Nevada Employment Security

ATTACHMENT 4

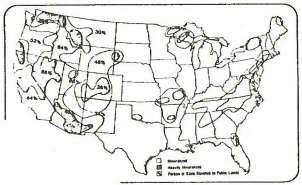
MINERAL POTENTIAL OF RECOMMENDED WILDERNESS AREAS*

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA	WSA MINERALS POTENTIAL	RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVE MINERALS POTENTIAL	PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE MINERALS POTENTIAL
Blue Eagle	Good 2% Speculative 90% Low 8%	Good 0% Speculative 92% Low 8%	Good 0% Speculative 92% Low 8%
Fandango	Speculative 60% Low 40%	Not recommended as wilderness	Speculative 53% Low 47%
Kawich	High 5% Good 70% Speculative 25%	Not recommended as wilderness	Not recommended as wilderness
Morey Peak	Good 25% Speculative 55% Low 20%	Not recommended as wilderness	Good 28% Speculative 45% Low 27%
Palisade Mesa	Good 8% Speculative 50% Low 42%	Good 5% Speculative 47% Low 48%	Good 5% Speculative 47% Low 48%
Rawhide Mountain	High 10% Good 12% Speculative 78%	Not recommended as wilderness	Not recommended as wilderness
South Reveille	Good 30% Speculative 60% Low 10%	Not recommended as wilderness	Good 14% Speculative 86% Low 0%
The Wall	Low 100%	Low 100%	Low 100%

* These percentages are extremely rough "eyeball" estimates

ATTACHMENT 5

U.S. MINERALS POTENTIAL



Source: U.S. Bureau of Mines and American Mining Congress

Comment Letter 11

ATTACHMENT 6

SUGGESTED RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVE

Wilderness Study Area	3 Acreage with Low Potential	2 Percent of Area with Low Potential	1 Total Area
Blue Eagle	4,765 ac	8%	59,560
Fandango	16,376	40%	40,940
Morey Peak	6,024	20%	20,120
Palisade Mesa	41,811	42%	99,550
South Reveille	10,620	10%	106,200
Wall	38,000	100%	38,000
Total Acreage Excluding Blue Eagle	112,831		

ROBERT LAIT
GOVERNOR

JOSEPH C. GREENLEY
DIRECTOR

1100 VALLEY ROAD P.O. BOX 10678 RENO, NEVADA 89520 TELEPHONE (702) 784-6214

August 17, 1981

Mr. John Sparhel
State Clearinghouse
Office of the State Planning Coordinator
Capitol Complex
Carson City, NV 89710

Dear John:

The Nevada Department of Wildlife appreciates the opportunity to review and provide comments on the Tonopah Resource Area - Wilderness Study Area Planning Criteria, SAI NV # 82300008.

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11-24 The Nevada Department of Wildlife doubts that any of the nine listed proposed study areas will meet wilderness requirements when the Environmental Statement is completed and all of the data are analyzed. Most of the areas have existing road corridors, have had extensive past mining operations, currently have existing structures such as cabins, etc., and contain sections of either private property or patented mining claims. We assume that most of these areas under consideration will be eliminated in the near future through the planning process. However, we do submit the following comments for your consideration.

1. Kawich: This area includes a very small portion of the Kawich Mountain Range in addition to a portion of the lower Stone Cabin Valley. The upper elevations are inhabited by a resident and wintering population of mule deer while the valley areas support a resident antelope population. Chukar partridge are found throughout the area and there are no fishable streams. There are numerous well traveled roads to the south of every canyon in addition to roads which extend into Hawe and Belleblen Canyons, all of which are used by hunters as a means of access. Although the map is difficult to read, it also appears that the Brown Ranch area is included in the study area. All of the above listed ranches and canyons are private property owned by local ranchers of central Nevada, even though none of the above have permanent residence. Although the old town of Silverbow is located to the south of the proposed wilderness area, there was historically a considerable amount of activity within the boundaries of the study area. We do not think that a wilderness designation would affect wildlife one way or the other with the exception of eliminating a small amount of hunter access.

Mr. John Sparhel
August 17, 1981
Page 2

2. Rawhide Mountain: Rawhide Mountain is not a significant or key wildlife area even though it does support a small resident and moderate wintering population of mule deer in addition to supporting a low density chukar population. The area has no major roads and is not heavily used by the hunting public. It is doubtful that the designation of this section of land as a wilderness area will effect wildlife one way or the other.

3. South Reveille: This area receives only very light use by mule deer and chukar partridge but is not significant in terms of hunting pressure or public use. All of the western half of the study area is located on the Nellis Bombing and Gunnery Range which is theoretically closed to public use at the present time. Both sides and the south end of the proposed wilderness area are inhabited by a scattered population of resident antelope which may be affected indirectly because of restricted access (more so then at present). Impacts to the wildlife resources would be minimal.

4. Palisade Mesa: That portion of the Pancake Range and Hot Creek Valley designated as the Palisade Mesa may properly be described as some of the most desolate country in central Nevada. There are a few mule deer, a scattering of chukar partridge during good moisture years, and an occasional lost antelope that drifts up from Reveille Valley or down from Little Smoky Valley. Since there is little if anything in the way of wildlife values in this section of the state, wilderness will not improve or hamper the existing situation.

5. The Wall: Same comments as for number 4.

6. Great Range: That portion of the BLM administered habitat on the Great Range is apparently tied into possible wilderness proposals of the U.S. Forest Service in the adjacent higher elevations. We will reserve comments on this section of the study proposal until the U.S. Forest Service proposal is reviewed. That portion administered by BLM that is proposed as a potential wilderness area is not large enough to adversely effect any wildlife considerations.

11-25 7. Pancakes: The Department of Wildlife is opposed to the designation of the Hot Creek Mountain Range in terms of wilderness consideration because of its importance as a deer winter range and the need to provide hunter access into the area for population control and management. Again, the map is difficult to read, but it appears that the study area would close Fourmile Canyon, Cow Springs, Little Cow Canyon, and several other important access routes that link Hot Creek Valley and Little Fish Lake Valley via Fourmile Canyon and the vicinity of Stonewall and Cow Canyons. Data from central Nevada indicates that deer populations are increasing significantly and that this particular area is supporting an increasing number of wintering deer annually. We will undoubtedly need to direct increasing hunting pressure into this

11-24 The conflicts with those intrusions which you have indicated were eliminated during the inventory and study phases. The areas which remain were felt to have wilderness values superior to the other values which would be foregone if the areas were designated as wilderness. A comprehensive analysis of these values has been completed in this final EIS.

11-25 The proposed action for the Pandango WSA no longer recommends the closure of roads, specifically Sixmile Canyon. The impacts to mule deer populations were analyzed as an issue in the final EIS.

Comment Letter 11

Mr. John Sparbel
August 17, 1981
Page 3

area in the future to insure that deer do not become over-abundant and over-utilize the range as was the case during the 1950's.

11-26 8. Morey: The Department of Wildlife is opposed to wilderness consideration for this area at this time for the same reasons listed above. It may also be very important, for the wise management of bighorn sheep, to maintain access into the area for purposes of habitat improvement which may include water developments, burning, etc. The designation of the Morey Peak and Bench areas could have serious negative impacts to the wildlife resources in the future.

9. Blue Eagle: That portion of the Grant Range in the vicinity of Blue Eagle Mountain is similar to the Not Creek Range in that it provides an extremely important wintering and migration area for mule deer that are normally found during the summer months on the White Pine Mountain Range. Access is very limited at the present time in most areas because of the steep terrain in the upper elevations and general lack of public use throughout this section of the state. The Department of Wildlife opposes the wilderness designation of this area because of possible future adverse impacts and current need to provide hunter access into the area.

If you have any questions regarding the comments, please contact our Reno office at 784-6234 at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

JOSEPH C. GREENLEY, DIRECTOR

George K. Tsukamoto
Acting Director

WKJ:pw

cc: Region III
Lind Bethard
Rose Strickland

Response Letter 11

11-26 Please refer to response 11-25 above.

Comment Letter 11

NEVADA LEGISLATURE

FEDERAL REGULATION REVIEW COMMITTEE

LEGISLATIVE BUILDING
CAPITOL COMPLEX
CARSON CITY, NEVADA 89710

SENATOR JAMES N. KIHUEN
SENATOR NORMAN D. GLASER
ASSEMBLYWOMAN KAREN W. JONES
ASSEMBLYMAN DEAN A. RHODES

STAFF DIRECTOR ROBERT E. ERICKSON (702) 885-5627

June 25, 1982

Edward F. Spang, State Director
Bureau of Land Management - Nevada
Nevada State Office
P.O. Box 12000
Reno, NV 89520

Dear Ed:

Thank you for inviting our comments on BLM's wilderness proposals for the Tonopah Resource Area. Although we have no specific comments at this time, we would like you to be aware of our general position regarding wilderness areas.

First of all, the Nevada legislature has recognized wilderness areas as a proper use for some of Nevada's public lands. Chapter 321.5917 of the Nevada Revised Statutes, which is a portion of Nevada's "Sagebrush Rebellion" law, is enclosed for your information. We definitely anticipate that we will endorse some of your wilderness proposals at a later date.

11-27 Secondly, we would strongly recommend that the Nevada BLM, BLM at the national level, or the Secretary of the Interior, establish another public review and comment period in 1986 regarding all BLM wilderness recommendations for Nevada. We believe that the citizens of Nevada, governmental entities, special interest groups, as well as our own committee should be given an opportunity to comment on your entire wilderness package before it goes on to Congress. We believe that we will also be in a better position to endorse specific wilderness area proposals after recommendations for each of BLM's resource areas and more detailed mineral surveys have been completed.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Norman D. Glaser
Chairman

NDG/jlb
cc: Nevada Congressional Delegation
Robert Burford, Director, BLM
Lexite A. Monroe

Response Letter 11

11-27 Please realize that each wilderness study area is judged individually on its own merits. The decision to recommend all, none, or any part of a WSA is made by analyzing each WSA separately. A total of 120 days of review period has been open to Federal, State, local government, Indian tribes and all organizations and industrial groups, as well as individuals. Congress has the perogative to hold any other meetings they so desire, however, there has been ample opportunity to comment on each WSA proposal.

It should also be noted that a review period will be held following the completion of mineral reports by the Bureau of Mines and the U.S. Geological Survey. This review will be limited, however, to the contents and significance of these reports.

Comment Letter 11

321.5977 CONTROL AND SALE OF STATE LANDS

321.5977 Objectives in administering public lands. The public lands of Nevada must be administered in such a manner as to conserve and preserve natural resources, wildlife habitat, wilderness areas, historical sites and artifacts, prehistoric sites and artifacts, paleontological resources, and other scientific and educational values of compatible public uses for recreation, agriculture, ranching, grazing and timber production and the development, production and transmission of energy and other public utility services under principles of multiple use which provide the greatest benefit to the people of Nevada.
(Added to NRS by 1979, 1365, A 1981, 323)

321.599 Disposal of public lands; legislative authorization required; state land registrar may dispose of lands to some extent, in same manner as Federal Government; deposit of proceeds.

1. Except as provided in subsection 2, no sale, conveyance or other disposal of public lands may be permitted or authorized by the state land registrar except as specifically authorized by an act of the legislature enacted after July 1, 1981.

2. To the extent that the public lands may be conveyed, leased, permitted, or licensed by the Federal Government or any of its agencies, the state land registrar is hereby authorized to convey, lease, license or permit the use of public lands to the same extent or in the same manner as those lands are conveyed, leased, licensed or permitted to be used by the Federal Government or any of its agencies.

3. All proceeds of fees, rents, royalties or other money paid to the state under NRS 321.596 to 321.599, inclusive, must be deposited with the state treasurer for credit to the state general fund.
(Added to NRS by 1979, 1365)

321.5983 Unauthorized disposal of public lands is void; state authorization required for use, management, disposal of public lands; injunctions; action to recover consideration received from unlawful disposition of public land.

1. Except as it is authorized pursuant to NRS 321.5975 or except as it may be authorized by the state land registrar pursuant to any authority conferred upon him by law, any sale, lease, exchange, encumbrance or other disposal of any parcel of or any interest in the public lands is void.

2. Any person who intends to perform or who actually carries out any act respecting the use, management or disposal of any of the public lands contrary to any statute, ordinance, regulation, venue or usage of the United States or otherwise, shall obtain written authorization from the state land registrar approving or confirming any such act, which authorization shall be given only to the extent it is authorized under the laws of this state.

3. Any person who does not obtain written authorization from the state land registrar as required by subsection 2 may be enjoined by the state land registrar from attempting to perform or continuing to carry out any act respecting the use, management or disposal of any of the

STATE OF NEVADA
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Division of State Lands

July 23, 1982

JUL 27

Jim Fox
District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Second and Scott Streets
Battle Mountain, Nevada 89820

Dear Mr. Fox:

Enclosed is a resolution adopted by the Nevada State Land Use Planning Advisory Council at their meeting on June 11, 1982.

If you have any questions or comments, please give me a call.

Sincerely,

Jac R. Shaw
Jac R. Shaw
Administrator

JRS/MH/js

cc: SLUPAC Members

Comment Letter 11

RESOLUTION

NEVADA STATE LAND USE PLANNING ADVISORY COUNCIL

RS 82-1

WHEREAS, the Nevada State Land Use Planning Advisory Council has heard presentations and public comments expressing concern about the method of evaluation of wilderness study areas by the Bureau of Land Management; and

WHEREAS, a recommendation by the Bureau of Land Management to close certain "cherry stem" roads and to combine two wilderness study areas within the Tonopah Resource Area by closing a road between them violates the original philosophy of the wilderness study process and may set a precedent; and

WHEREAS, there is concern that the lack of sufficient mineral survey data and the classification of areas based on past mineral production may adversely affect future exploration of areas that have had no past production, yet have been recognized as potentially productive; and

WHEREAS, the Bureau of Land Management has indicated that they are being adversely affected by federal budget cuts and there is concern that important areas of study may not receive the attention they deserve and that decisions may be reached without thorough evaluation; and

WHEREAS, without active public participation in the preparation of an environmental impact study, the risk of recommendations being detrimental to a county is great,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that all Nevada county officials become aware of the Bureau of Land Management's Wilderness Program and promote public involvement and participation in the wilderness study area process; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the State Land Use Planning Advisory Council disagrees with the preferred alternative because it would be detrimental to the conventional use of Nevada's recreational lands.

Sammye Ugalde

SAMMYE UGALDE, CHAIRMAN

ADOPTED: JUNE 11, 1982

Comment Letter 12

mec

MINERALS EXPLORATION COALITION

PLEASE NOTE NEW ADDRESS:

P. O. Box 15638
Denver, Colorado 80215

July 29, 1982

Mr. Leslie A. Monroe
Tonopah Resource Area Manager
P.O. Box 911
Tonopah, Nevada 89049

Dear Sir:

This letter constitutes the written comments of the Minerals Exploration Coalition (MEC) on the Tonopah Resource Area Preliminary Wilderness Recommendations Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The MEC represents mineral exploration companies and individuals conducting hard mineral exploration on federal land.

General Comments

The geology and minerals information used in this report was prepared under contract for the Air Force for purposes related to possible deployment of the MX missile by Pargo National/Ertec Western Inc. While it may be the best data and the most reliable determination of mineral potential, it does not constitute a mineral potential assessment derived from complete modern geologic, geochemical and geophysical data. It is hoped that the Bureau of Land Management Geological, Energy, Minerals (GEM) resources assessment contracts now underway will develop more data.

12-1 A serious omission in this report is the absence of a map showing the extent and location of existing and ongoing mineral exploration activities. Mine workings and mining claims should be described and shown. Information obtained from other sources indicates that more than 300 mining claims are present in the WSA's. These claims indicate that the potential for mineral resources is being explored currently in these areas.

780 WEST TENNESSEE AVE., SUITE 103 • DENVER, COLORADO 80223 • (303) 722-2235

Comment Letter 12

TO: Mr. Leslie A. Monroe -2- July 29, 1982

If a large number of unpatented mining claims are included in designated wilderness areas, costly and time consuming administrative problems are likely to occur. After wilderness designation, the validity of all unpatented claims must be determined before a work plan can be approved. Mineral examiners must inspect and sample each claim and render their findings; the claimant will likely challenge these findings and legal action may follow.

In view of the fact that wilderness areas designated after December 31, 1983 will be withdrawn from appropriation under the mining and leasing laws, we believe that all areas with mineral and energy potential should be excluded from wilderness designation, even though no economic deposit is now known. The withdrawal limitations will preclude collection of new data and new areas of mineral potential will not be found. With new discoveries effectively stopped, the policy of excluding all currently known mineral potential from wilderness should be followed, so that exploration of these areas will not be restricted and minerals might yet be produced. Explorationists tend to look at the long term because the lead time of discovery may be ten to fifteen years. The impact of wilderness on minerals should be assessed over the long term (a century or more). We believe that land use decisions should be in conformity with the policy statements made in the National Minerals Program Plan and Report to Congress released by the President in April.

Specific Comments

12-2 Rawhide

The presence of substantial known mineral deposits in the area and favorable geologic environment for both energy and mineral resources indicate that this area should not be recommended for wilderness designation. The MEC supports the preferred alternative of nonsuitability for wilderness.

Rawhide Mountain

The presence of the Tybo mining district in the WSA and the favorable geologic environment for both energy and mineral resources indicate that this area should not be recommended for wilderness designation. The MEC supports the preferred alternative of nonsuitability for wilderness.

Response Letter 12

12-1 Please refer to Chapter Three of this document where you will find maps for each WSA which include a map entitled Mining Claims and Mineral Leases. These maps show all known legal claims which had been filed at the time the draft document was published.

Also, Chapter Three describes the number and type of claims and leases found in each WSA under the descriptions of Minerals.

12-2 An alternative analyzing nondesignation has been completed for both of these WSAs. It will be considered as well as the other alternatives before Congress makes a final decision on designation.

Comment Letter 12

TO: Mr. Leslie A. Monroe -3- July 29, 1982

Fandango - Morey

These two WSA's have similar geology and similar mineral and energy potential with major areas of mineral potential. While the preferred alternative does reduce the amount of known mineralized land included in the recommended wilderness, it still contains large areas of potential. These WSA's should be recommended as nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

12-3 The recommendation to join these two areas as one by closing the road is questionable. A road is an important legal entity particularly in determining wilderness suitability. The Federal Land Management and Policy Act states that a wilderness area must be at least 5000 acres in area and roadless. The definition of a road, as you know, has become a highly controversial and very important issue. In view of this situation, it does not seem reasonable and we question the legality of arbitrarily closing a road. If this can be done with impunity and becomes accepted practice in the Bureau of Land Management, many areas once considered to be roaded may be declared roadless by simply closing the roads.

Pajarado Mesa

This area is shown to have significant mineral and energy resource potential and even though the preferred alternative reduces the area, a substantial mineral and energy resource potential is included. MEC urges that the entire area be recommended as unsuitable for wilderness designation.

The Wall

All of this area is shown to have low mineral and energy potential; nonetheless, it should remain open so that future exploration can be conducted to obtain more data necessary to assess its true potential. We all know that many areas once considered non-mineral are now the sites of mines. The MEC believes the WSA should be recommended as unsuitable for wilderness.

South Reveille

The preferred alternative includes a portion of an area shown to have good mineral potential for metals within a few miles of the New Reveille mining district while excluding some areas of mineral and energy potential. We favor non-wilderness recommendation for this area.

267

Response Letter 12

12-3 There are two important points that need to be addressed:

(1) The proposed action for this WSA does not recommend the closure of South Sixmile Road.

(2) It is not the intent of the Bureau to arbitrarily close roads, however, it is within their authority to do so. After careful evaluation, in certain circumstances it may be deemed necessary to close roads to adequately manage a designated wilderness area.

Comment Letter 12

TO: Mr. Leslie A. Monroe -4- July 29, 1982

Blue Eagle

The presence of jasperoid zones in sedimentary rocks and intrusive bodies with tungsten and other metals in the known mining districts are strong indicators that ore deposits may be nearby. This area should remain open to mineral exploration. While the preferred alternative is smaller than the WSA, the MEC favors a recommendation of nonsuitability for wilderness designation.

Grant Range

The MEC favors the preferred alternative to recommend the area as unsuitable for wilderness designation.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment upon this draft environmental impact statement.

Sincerely,

MINERALS EXPLORATION COALITION

John D. Wells

John D. Wells
Managing Director

JDW/la

Comment Letter 13

May 17,1982

Leslie A. Monroe
Area Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Tonopah Resource Area
P.O.Box 911
Tonopah,NV 89049

RE:Draft Tonopah Preliminary Wilderness Recommendations EIS

Mr. Monroe,

I would like to offer my support for the BLM's Preferred Alternative selection of 488,000 acres within the Tonopah Resource Area as wilderness designation. The closure of South Six Mile Road allowing the inclusion of Fandango and Morey Wilderness Study Areas within the designation is wholeheartedly supported.

Inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System as proposed will result in the establishment of the first Pinyon-Juniper Woodland Ecosystem and greatly increase the Great Basin Sagebrush Ecosystem now currently represented by only a small area in California.

Please keep me informed on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Charles Keel

Charles Keel
Route 1, Box 106-72
Norman, OR 73069

cc:Senator Howard Cannon
Senator Paul Laxalt
Congressman James Santini

Comment Letter 14

3435 Indian Lane
Reno, Nevada 89506

May 7, 1982

Bureau of Land Management
P. O. Box 911
Tonopah, Nevada 89049

Gentlemen:

This letter is in response to the "Draft-Tonopah Preliminary Wilderness Recommendations Environmental Impact Statement" which was released to the public on April 9, 1982.

My purpose in this letter is to protest several of the decisions and recommendations in the document which pertain to the treatment of mineral potential and inclusion of known and acknowledged roads into wilderness study areas ("roadless" areas).

In general, as regards mineral and energy potential within WSA's, I object to the apparent cavalier and wholesale dismissal of mineral and energy potential of the lands included in the various WSA's. This dismissal occurs in spite of the fact that there are major known occurrences of base and precious metals (such as Ypo) and recent discoveries of base, precious and strategic minerals (such as the tin-bearing porphyry molybdenum deposit at Morey Peak).

14-1 I also object to the manner of mineral and energy resource appraisal, whereby the MX Mineral Resources Survey, Nevada-Utah Siting Area, prepared by Fugro National, Inc. was used. First, I believe the value and quality of this MX report is questionable. Second, the objectives of the MX report were not designed to provide the rigorous and integrated information so necessary to a mineral and energy resource appraisal of an area which is subject to potential permanent withdrawal.

Furthermore, it should be apparent that lands previously valueless or of low mineral potential utilizing present concepts of ore formation may become the "hot spots" in the future. The presence of known occurrences plus recent discoveries combined with the MX Mineral Appraisal, inadequate as it is, still indicate the enormous mineral and energy potential of the subject WSA's, therefore, I believe that the Kawich, Kawhide Mountain, Fandango, Morey, Palisade Mesa, The Wall, South Revelle and Blue Eagle WSA's should be returned to multiple use management.

I object to the recommendation that 62 miles of existing roadway be closed. The first page of the Draft refers to Section 603 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, which mandates the review of public land roadless areas. The intent of this Act is not to close areas with roads in order to create wilderness. The intent is to identify existing roadless areas. Since the Tonopah BLM originally defined the Morey Peak, Fandango, Palisade Mesa and The Wall WSA's by utilizing acknowledged roads as boundaries, I would be
14-2 interested to hear the rationalization which recommends the inclusion of

Comment Letter 14

62 miles of these same roads into WSA's (roadless areas).

The recommendation that roads be closed, "rehabilitated," and included in wilderness seems to me to be in direct contradiction to the stated intent of the 1976 mandate. Rather than road closure and rehabilitation, it is my opinion that the areas under consideration (Morey Peak, Fandango, Palisade Mesa, and The Wall) do not meet wilderness criteria and should be returned to multiple use management.

Sincerely,

John E. Hiner

cc: E. Spang
B. Herren
Congressman Santini
Senator Laxalt
Senator Cannon

Response Letter 14

14-1 The data and findings of FUGRO National, Inc. (now ERTEC) were felt to be the best information currently assembled and available. Mineral resources survey reports will also be prepared by the U.S. Geological Survey and the U.S. Bureau of Mines on all areas with a preliminary recommendation as suitable for wilderness designation. This additional mineral resources information will become part of the information used by the Secretary of Interior in making his final recommendation.

14-2 The Regulations of Implementing the Procedural Provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (40 CFR part 1502.14) requires agencies to rigorously explore and objectively evaluate all reasonable alternatives. The alternatives, including the recommendation to close roads under the manageability alternative, provide the decisionmaker with several complete and reasonable resource management alternatives from which to choose. The plan allows for reasonable areas for all valid rights established prior to the time an area is designated as wilderness.

Comment Letter 15

P. O. Box 6250
Reno, Nevada 89513

May 6, 1982

Bureau of Land Management
P. O. Box 911
Tonopah, Nevada 89049

Re: Draft Tonopah Preliminary
Wilderness Recommendations
Environmental Impact Statement

Gentlemen:

This letter is in response to the captioned document which was prepared by the Tonopah Resource Area of the Bureau of Land Management at Tonopah, Nevada.

The purpose of this letter is to protest some of the recommendations made in the captioned document with respect to roads.

During the period when the Wilderness Study Areas were being outlined numerous individuals and organizations expressed concern that the roads in the Morey Peak, Fandango, Palisade Mesa and The Wall Wilderness Study Areas made them unsuitable for wilderness. The BLM at that time took the position that the existing roads did not detract from the wilderness characteristics of those areas.

Now the BLM is recommending that 62 miles (P. 2-8 of above document) of roads be closed! Some of the roads recommended for closure form the boundaries between the Morey Peak and Fandango WSA's and between the Palisade Mesa and The Wall WSA's. The other roads recommended for closure are dead-end roads which have been "cherry stemmed" into the WSA's.

It is my opinion that since the BLM now believes that the existing roads must be closed and rehabilitated to make the WSA's suitable for wilderness classification the Morey Peak, Fandango, Palisade Mesa and The Wall areas should be recommended for return to multiple use management.

Sincerely,

R. I. Forest

cc: E. Spang
J. Fox
Congressman Santini
Senator Laxalt
Senator Cannon

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Comment Letter 16

JOHN HART

San Anselmo, California 94960
(415) 453-8842

April 25, 1982

RECEIVED
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
APR 29 1982
TONOPAH RESOURCE AREA OFFICE

Mr. Leslie A. Monroe
Tonopah Resource Area Manager
Building 108, Military Circle
Tonopah, Nevada 89049

Dear Mr. Monroe:

Thanks for the opportunity to comment on the DEIS on Preliminary Wilderness Recommendations in the Tonopah RA.

With slight reservations, I favor the "Emphasis on Manageability" Alternative. It seems the most intelligent of the five.

I can see no justification for recommending against classification of over half the acreage, as the Preferred alternative does. Your analysis makes it clear that none of the alternatives will make any appreciable difference to the local economy, so there is no fundamental conflict requiring compromise to be resolved.

On the other hand, the wilderness-related benefits of primitive recreation and solitude do increase with acreage classified and protected from distracting intrusions. It is quite wrong to suggest, as the document does on page 2-10, that these benefits are the same under the Preferred and Manageability alternatives!

Some specific comments by area:

Fandango-Morey: Three cheers for persevering in the plan to close the South Gizzie Canyon Road! This action will make the combined area a first-rate unit. However, the boundaries proposed in the Manageability Alternative are better than in the Preferred: the Preferred leaves some of those cherry-stem roads open. Far better to close them all and smooth the boundary.

I am not so pleased with the idea of excluding Morey Ranch. I'm unable to comment on detail on the merits--just how great the need may be for intrusive management for the benefit of deer. But it seems a pity to me that valley areas are [redacted] so systematically excluded from the recommendations. Here and there the BLM should endorse Wilderness units including valley lands, and make the commitment to protect the wildness of those lands.

Palisade-The Wall: The Manageability alternative has the best boundaries, closing cherrystem roads and fusing the two areas into one.

Comment Letter 16

P.O. Box 1 A.A

Blue Eagle: Adding 750 acres to round out the west edge seems a good idea. However, the Preferred alternative is weak in that it leaves cherrystem roads open--all should be closed.

The Blue Eagle proposal contains a more basic flaw. The small roadless area due east of Blue Eagle Mountain itself should have become a WSA, and this WSA should have been combined with the Blue Eagle area in a unified Wilderness proposal, on the model of Morey-Fandango. These boundaries would put Blue Eagle Mountain at the core of a generous unit, not near one edge; some valuable water sources would also have been added to the Wilderness proposal.

I would urge most strongly that the BLM take the initiative NOW to put forward an expanded Blue Eagle Wilderness proposal.

South Reveille: The valley lands in this unit should be retained, as in the Manageability alternative. Maybe this could be the Resource Area's one major example of primitive valley lands.

One point I missed in general comments at the beginning of this letter: high erosion potential areas in the WSAs surely ought to be recommended for Wilderness, as most of them are in the Manageability alternative.

Again, I appreciate the chance to review this document.

Sincerely,

John Hart

John Hart

Comment Letter 17

Noranda Exploration, Inc.
55 North Edison Way, Ste
P. O. Box 7176
Reno, Nevada 89510

noranda

Tel. (702) 786-5801

June 25, 1982

Mr. Leslie A. Monroe, Tonopah Resource Area Manager
Bureau of Land Management
P. O. Box 911,
Tonopah, Nevada 89049

Re: Draft Environmental Impact Statement
Preliminary Wilderness Recommendations
Tonopah Resource Area, Nevada

Dear Mr. Monroe:

Please accept these comments concerning the above DEIS on behalf of Noranda Exploration, Inc.

I'd like first to make some general comments regarding some of the methods and policies evident in the study.

17-1 The Preferred Alternative proposes to combine the Fandango and Morey wilderness study areas by closing South Stamile Road. Three "cherrystem" roads in the Fandango WSA are also recommended to be closed. BLM's goal in proposing to close the roads is to enhance the areas' manageability.

This procedure is a clear violation of the intent of the wilderness program as expressed in the Wilderness Act of 1964 and FLPMA. The Wilderness Act requires that a wilderness have at least 5000 acres or be of sufficient size to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition. FLPMA mandates review of "roadless areas of 5000 acres or more." In other words, an area must be both roadless and manageable without using artificial means to render it so. If the Morey and Fandango WSA's are not roadless and manageable without closing and rehabilitating roads, they simply do not qualify as wilderness.

17-2 Also of concern to Noranda is the quality of the mineral resource data used by BLM in the study. As you know, the information was developed by Fugro for use by the Air Force in its MX DEIS. Fugro's only field work involved visits to document the existence of operating properties. No original data were collected.

Comment Letter 17

June 25 1982
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In addition, both "high" and "good" mineral potential designations were contingent upon evidence of past or present production. Most areas labeled as having "speculative" mineral potential simply have unknown potential. Several of the recent discoveries of major Carlin-type gold deposits were made in areas that had had no past production. Had this study been made a few years previously, those areas would likely have been labeled as having "speculative" potential.

A large portion of Noranda's exploration is conducted in areas which would be classified as "speculative." Criteria such as the type of rocks present and the amount of fracturing in them are quite often more important than evidence of past production.

The USGS or the Bureau of Mines must conduct a mineral study which will accompany the final EIS. The General Accounting Office recently evaluated USGS/BOM mineral studies in a report entitled "Mineral Data in the Service's Roadless Area Review and Evaluation (RARE II) is Misleading and Should Be Corrected." GAO reports:

> Many mineral ratings in the RARE II report for the five Western States we examined are misleading. The RARE II report misleads its reader into thinking that, in many study areas, there was little or no mineral potential at all when, in reality, mineral data was (sic) either not available or insufficient." Also - "a Forest Service geologist described an instance in Region 1 in which oil and gas potential in one study area was rated zero because there was no lease activity or geologic data indicating the presence of minerals. However, subsequent to the completion of RARE II, significant oil and gas lease activity occurred. The geologist said that if he had to rate the area today, a moderate to high oil and gas potential would result. Whereas the presence of exploration interest may be an indicator of mineral potential, we believe the absence of such interest does not automatically indicate zero potential as a U. S. Geological Survey mineral expert agrees. The official stated there are many areas in which little is known and exploration of some form would be necessary to provide proper evaluation of the mineral potential. Wyoming's overthrust belt is a classic example of an area thought to have low oil and gas potential several years ago, but which today is one of the most promising onshore oil and gas prospects."

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17-1 Please refer to response 12-3 to the Minerals Exploration Coalition.

17-2 In the evaluation process used to determine the recommendation for each WSA, the best available data was used. Not all paleozoic sediments produce minerals nor does 1000 mining claims make a valid discovery. Without data, actual potential is unknown. Unknown does not mean zero and cannot be assumed to infer potential resources. The Bureau is relying upon the Bureau of Mines and U.S. Geological Survey to evaluate and further define the mineral potential of the WSAs recommended for wilderness designation. This information will be reviewed, and if it is sufficient enough to warrant a change in a recommendation, a supplement will be issued to make that change.

Comment Letter 17

Mr. Leslie A. Monroe
June 25, 1982
Page Three

We do not espouse government-funded exploration programs. We do suggest that areas be classified more realistically according to mineral potential and that areas with unknown potential not necessarily be classified as speculative.

As the House Interior Committee just agreed to legislation which will prohibit forever the exploration of Wilderness areas, it becomes more critical that all Wilderness proposals be objectively evaluated.

More specifically, we must object to the recommendations to include the Morey and Fandango areas as wilderness. The areas contain nearly 100 mining claims and geology favorable for discovery of mineral deposits. At least as important, both contain roads which BLM proposes to eliminate.

The inclusion of the South Reveille area must also be opposed. It too, contains areas of favorable geology which should remain available for exploration. It also contains more than 90 mining claims.

The mineral potential of the Blue Eagle WSA has also been underestimated. It too contains Paleozoic sediments favorable for mineral deposition and borders on known occurrences. It also contains over 100 mining claims.

In summary, we must object to the policy of proposing "manufactured" wilderness areas. Additionally, the mineral potential of the WSA's must be more objectively assessed.

Sincerely,

NORANDA EXPLORATION, INC.

Joyce Hall
Landman

cc: Senator Howard Cannon
Senator Paul Laxalt
Congressman Jim Santini
Robert S. Neal
Mary Ann Nicholls
Robert E. Warren
Pamela Gene Cosby
Robert Erickson

Comment Letter 18

July 5, 1982

Dear Mr Monroe,

I am writing to indicate my support for the BLM Draft EIS outlining recommendations for Wilderness Study Areas in the Battle Mountain Districts Tonopah Resource Area & support the Preferred Alternative which recommends a total 234,000 acres to be designated as Wilderness.

Sincerely,

Fred R. Fogo
570 Fir
Elko, NV 89801

Comment Letter 19

E A HOLLINGSWORTH
ATTORNEY AND COUNSELLOR AT LAW
604 LANDER ST
RENO, NEVADA 89503
TELEPHONE 348-1888

July 9, 1982

Mr. Leslie A. Monroe
Tonopah Resource Area Manager
Building 102 Military Circle
Tonopah, Nevada 89049

Re: Comments on the Draft Preliminary
Wilderness Recommendations
Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Mr. Monroe:

Following are excerpts from certain sections of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, 43 U.S.C.S. Secs. 1701 et seq., which are relevant to the wilderness program:

1701. Declaration of Policy. --- (a) the Congress declares that it is the policy of the United States that ---

(1) the public lands shall be retained in federal ownership unless as a result of the land use planning procedure provided for in this Act, it is determined that disposal of a particular parcel will serve the national interests;

(2) the national interest will be best realized if the public lands and their resources are periodically and systematically inventoried and their present and future use is projected through a land use planning process coordinated with other Federal and State planning efforts;

* * *

(7) goals and objectives be established by law as guidelines for public land use planning, and that management be on the basis of multiple use and sustained yield unless otherwise specified by law; (underscoring added)

* * *

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Mr. Leslie A. Monroe
July 9, 1982
Page 2

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(12) the public land be managed in a manner which recognizes the Nation's need for domestic sources of minerals, food, timber and fiber from the public lands including the implementation of the Mining and Minerals Policy Act of 1970 (84 Stat. 1876, 30 U.S.C. Sec.21a) as it pertains to the public lands; (underscoring added)

* * *

1702. Definitions. Without altering in any way the meaning of the following terms as used in any other statute, whether or not such statute is referred to in, or amended by, this Act, as used in this Act.

* * *

(1.) the term "principal or major uses" includes, and is limited to, domestic livestock grazing, fish and wildlife development and utilization, mineral exploration and production, rights-of-way, outdoor recreation, and timber production (underscoring added) (Note that Wilderness is not defined as a principal or major use.)

* * *

1711. Inventory and Identification. --- (a) The Secretary shall prepare and maintain on a continuing basis an inventory of all public lands and their resource and other values (including, but not limited to, outdoor recreation and scenic values) giving priority to areas of critical environmental concern. This inventory shall be kept current so as to reflect changes in conditions and to identify new and emerging resources and other values. The preparation and maintenance of such inventory or identifications of such areas shall not, of itself, change or prevent change of the management or use of public lands.

* * *

1782. Bureau of Land Management wilderness study.
--- (a) Within fifteen years after the date of approval of this act (enacted Oct. 21, 1976), the Secretary shall review those roadless areas of five thousand acres or more and roadless islands of the public lands, identified during inventory required by Section 201(a) of this Act [43 U.S.C.S. Sec.1711] as having wilderness characteristics described in the Wilderness Act of September 3, 1964 (78 Stat.890; 16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq....(underscoring added)

By reference to the above cited sections and subsections of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, (FLPMA) it is obvious that the congress, in declaring the policy of the United States as it affects public lands, intended that the managers of the lands be sensitive to best interest of our nation in reaching decisions concerning such lands.

To assure the public that the nation's best interests would be realized, the Congress declared as a matter of policy, that the lands would be held in Federal ownership; that the present and future use of the public lands be projected through a land use planning process coordinated with other Federal and State planning efforts, the management of the lands be on the basis of multiple use and sustained yield, and that the public lands be managed in a manner which recognizes the nations needs for domestic sources of minerals, food, timber and fiber from the public lands.

To further assure that the best interests of the nation would be realized, the Congress defined the "principal and major uses" of the public lands to include, and be limited to, "domestic livestock grazing, fish and wildlife development and use, mineral exploration and production, rights of way, outdoor recreation and timber production". Note that "wilderness" is not included in the definition of the term, "principal or major uses".

Comment Letter 19

To implement its express declaration of policy, the Congress ordered the Secretary of Interior to prepare and maintain, on a continuing basis, "an inventory of all public lands and their resources and other values". The Congress also ordered the Secretary to development, maintain and, if necessary, revise land use plans in participation with State and local governments and other Federal agencies. (cf. 43 U.S.C.S. Sec.1712)

The importance of the inventory is manifest in those sections of FLPMA relating to withdrawals, (43 U.S.C.S. Sec. 1714) acquisitions, (Sec. 1715) exchanges, (Sec. 1716) conveyances (Sec. 1718) range management, (Sec. 1751) rights of way, (Sec. 1761) and wilderness (Sec. 1782). Without a comprehensive inventory of the public lands, management decisions relating to any of the above listed sections would certainly fall short of congressional intent and declared policy concerning land use planning and responsible land management.

19-1 However, notwithstanding the express intent and directions of the Congress, to say nothing of its declaration of policy concerning the management of public lands, the Secretary of Interior, through the Bureau of Land Management, (BLM) proceeded with a wilderness program which completely ignores the relevant provisions of both the Wilderness Act and FLPMA.

To begin with, in the section of FLMPA concerning the BLM wilderness study (43 U.S.C.S. Sec.1782), it is stated in unequivical terms that the Secretary "review those roadless areas of five thousand acres or more and roadless islands of the public land identified during the inventory required by section 201 of this Act [43 U.S.C.S. Sec.1711] as having wilderness characteristics...". (underscoring added)

Since wilderness is not a principal or major use of the public lands, and for all practical purposes has the effect of a withdrawal excluding one or more of the principal or major uses for two or more years, (cf 43 U.S.C.S. Sec. 1712(e)(2).) it is reasonable to expect that any decision resulting in the

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Mr. Leslie A. Montoe
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19-2 identification of public lands as being suitable for wilderness, would have taken into consideration the effect that wilderness designation would have on the principal or major uses of the lands designated as wilderness and the effect that the wilderness designation would have on the principal or major uses of the surrounding lands.

As is obvious from a review of the draft environmental impact statement, the nine wilderness study areas (WSA) described in the statement were identified with only cursory regard to the Wilderness Act and FLMPAand are therefore of questionable quality if not unlawfully constituted.

Examples of the unlawful and arbitrary conduct of BLM personnel while performing the wilderness review are as follows:

1. On pages S-1 of the draft, it is stated that:

"The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) wilderness review is mandated by Section 603 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 xxx"

As pointed out above, the relevant "mandate" of Congress required the Secretary of Interior to INVENTORY the public lands. The review of roadless areas in excess of 5000 acres for wilderness potential was to be performed AFTER the inventory process had been accomplished.

The reason for performing the inventory first are obvious and of utmost importance.

Initially, areas reviewed for possible inclusion in the wilderness system do not exist in a vacuum.

Many areas, where the land may be roadless, may be substantially natural and may have outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation, could not be recommended for wilderness because the presence of a wilderness area in the vicinity proposed may have a profound

Response Letter 19

19-1 Public Law 88-577 of September 3, 1964, commonly known as the "Wilderness Act" established the mandate for preservation of resources for " the permanent good of the whole people, and for other purposes" under the National Wilderness Preservation System. The Wilderness Act outlines a definition of what is considered wilderness. This definition was used in deciding which areas of Nevada qualified for wilderness through the wilderness inventory process. These types of determinations have been challenged through Interior Board of Lands Appeals (IBLA) and have been substantiated in IBLA decisions 81-541, 81-1093 and 81-540 (3/01/82). It has been well established that "wilderness" can be a valid use of public lands and need not preclude totally other uses described in FLPMA.

19-2 The effect of wilderness designation on other uses and developments both existing and anticipated within the wilderness areas identified in this resource area have been analyzed in this document. Chapter Two discusses the uses of the areas along with actions that will continue or may occur in the future. Chapter Four analyzes in detail the affects of those actions, both with and without wilderness designation. This process of analysis has been followed in numerous wilderness documents and have withstood challenge through IBLA appeals. It has been shown that as long as this process is followed, the Bureau can be upheld.

adverse affect on the use of the surrounding area for any of the principal or major uses of the land.

It must be borne in mind that the policy of the United States and the intent of Congress demand that the public lands be managed on the basis of multiple use and in a manner in which the nation's needs for minerals, food, timber and fiber are given full recognitions. Said policy and intent also contemplate comprehensive land planning by federal, state and local governments. Land planning can be comprehensive only if all relevant facts concerning the land are available for comparisons and recommendations.

At the time the nine WSAs were identified, the BLM used only three criteria for selecting lands considered by it to be suitable for wilderness, i.e., naturalness, solitude and opportunity for primitive and unconfined type of recreation. The minimum size limitation and roadless criteria, as will be shown later, were often overlooked. Totally ignored during the identification process were all other factors which competent land management procedures would accord great weight, not the least of which was an inventory such as the one "mandated" by Congress in 43 U.S.C.S. Sec.1711. Without the inventory, the most that can be said for the Secretary's wilderness program to date is that large parcels of land which might be enjoyed by a few back-packers and loners, have been identified on maps and in reports.

2. The Secretary, in conducting the wilderness study, has also neglected to consider the statutory definition of wilderness which is set forth in the Wilderness Act in the following terms:

> "A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammeled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain. An area of wilderness is further defined to mean in this Act an area of undeveloped federal land

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> retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions and which (1) generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable; (2) has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation; (3) has at least five thousand acres of land or is of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition; and (4) may also contain ecological, geogical, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value." (underscoring added)

19-3 By using the criteria relating only to size, naturalness, solitude and primitive and unconfined type of recreation, the Secretary has overlooked the very essence of wilderness and has placed in its stead a very limited recreational opoortunity for a disproportionately small number of users.

As is apparent from the definition, "wilderness" is not a use-oriented concept. Its objectives are directed toward preservation - a concept diametrically opposed to use.

In such posture, it is of utmost importance that areas, to be designated as wilderness, must possess such outstanding attributes that preservation of such attributes cannot be questioned and any use other than casual, infrequent visits by man, would be unconscionable.

The setting for this national gem must be such that the need to preserve the area far outweighs it use-oriented potential or the use potential of surrounding lands. Such a parcel of land in the State of Nevada would indeed be a rare occurrence. The contention of the BLM that the Tonopah Resources Area contains nine such parcels occupying

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Mr. Leslie A. Monroe
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approximately 500,000 acres of public land is preposterous if not absurd. To suggest that the State of Nevada contains over 100 such areas embracing 8,000,000 acres of land defies rational thought.

If "the primary goal of the BLM wilderness study process is to recommend for wilderness designation those areas where wilderness is determined to be the most appropriate use of the lands and its resources", as set forth on page 1-2 of the draft, the BLM, in selecting the nine WSAs described in the draft, either ignored the goal or was wholly unaware of the statutory definitions of wilderness, or both.

3. Wilderness is not a recreational opportunity, or a management tool, or a conservation aid, or a wildlife sanctuary, or a watershed protection device or any kind of a resource protection effort (except for the preservation of wilderness) as suggested in the draft. If any of these items are management concerns or problems on the area considered for wilderness, the area should not be recommended for inclusion in the wilderness system. As stated above, the definition of wilderness precludes the inclusions of such areas in the wilderness system.

If recreational opportunities are basic factors in wilderness determinations by the BLM, the selection of the nine WSAs obviously is anomalous to such a position.

On page 3-6 of the draft, the Bureau states:

> "Activities such as sightseeing, driving on ways and roads for pleasure, camping, hunting, fishing, trapping, hiking, rock and mountain climbing, backpacking, plant and mineral collecting, photography, bird watching, picknicking, and horseback riding comprise the majority of the primary recreational use on the public lands in the Tonopah Resource area. These traditional types of recreation have long been popular in the Kawich, Reveille Mountain, Pendango,

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19-3 Although the Wilderness Act is aimed at "preservation" of resource values, it is not a lock-up of public lands. The Wilderness Management Policy, which will be the ruling authority for designated wilderness areas, outlines guidelines for the continuation of many uses which occur now under FLPMA (i.e., livestock grazing, fish and wildlife development and use, outdoor recreation, and even mineral exploration and development). In the inventory process, conflicting uses were considered in determining areas to be recommended suitable for study. Most of these conflicts were eliminated before the study process was complete. Other effects of designation are analyzed in this document. Effects of other uses on the values of naturalness, solitude, and primitive and unconfined types recreation are also analyzed. Congress, through the evaluation of these effects, will make the final determination of what is the best use of the public lands.

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and Morey Wilderness Study areas. The recreation use occurs primarily on weekends and holidays with use often widely dispersed.

"Virtually all forms of recreation involve a vehicle, either for access to recreation sites or simply for the pleasure of operating the vehicle. The vast majority of public lands in the Tonopah Resource Area, including all the Wilderness Study Areas, are designated open to motor vehicle use. Off-road vehicle use is currently light and dispersed throughout, the resource area, with the majority of motor vehicle use occurring on existing ways and roads." (underscoring added)

Since "virtually all forms of recreation involve a vehicle" in the Tonopah Resources Area, designation of the WSAs described in the draft as wilderness, would virtually eliminate all forms of recreation from those study areas. Such a result could not be consistent with the interests of Congress in establishing a land use planning scheme for management decisions. To even the most disinterested observer, the substitution of a remote opportunity for solitude or primitive and unconfined type of recreation in the resource area, for such and intense long established recreational use pattern, would border on incompetency if not malfeasance on the part of the official approving such a substitution.

19-4 It would seem obvious to a person of ordinary prudence that the lands included in the WSAs being recreation oriented and subject to vehicular access, do not fit within the statutory definition of wilderness.

In light of the above comments, one might suspect that there exists a detectable amount confusion on the part of BLM as to what its responsibilities are under FLPMA and the Wilderness Act.

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19-4 The effects of vehicle oriented recreation use have been analyzed in the final EIS. Please refer to Chapter Four, Environmental Consequences, for the discussion of these effects in each WSA.

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19-5 4. Of all criteria contained in FLPMA and the Wilderness Act defining wilderness, it would seem that identifying "roadless areas of five thousand acres or more or roadless islands of public land" would be least subject to controversy. However, the BLM, in its relentless efforts to confuse and complicate the most simple task, have resorted to semantic distortions, asinine rulings and decisions and absurd interpretations of the law and regulations to fabricate roadless areas on parcels where roads predominate the landscape.

A road is defined in a dictionary as "an open way for the passage of vehicles, persons, and animals." In most western states and here in Nevada, a road to most people who derive their livelihood from use of the public lands or have occasion to go upon the public land for diverse reasons, means any set of tracks of whatever origin which permit passage from one point to the next for whatever purposes. The vastness of the state and paucity of access roads makes any passageway a valuable adjunct to the use and development of the principal and major uses of the public lands. The removal of any passage way of even the slightest utility from the public lands is irresponsible conduct and the Secretary should not condone such practices. Access in arid, mountainous regions is an asset not to be lightly disregarded. It also happens to be one of the principal and major uses of the public lands.

However, the BLM in its heedless efforts to fustrate the public land users and deny use of the public lands through closure or confining classifications, not only has redefined the road to mean something less than a road, but has actually delineated the boundaries of WSAs by use of roads, (which are roads even by the BLM's definitions) and have included areas containing long stretches of such road in the WSAs.

19-6 Notwithstanding the furor created by redefining roads, cherrystaking and the close proximity of roads to WSAs, as well as the inclusion of roads in the WSAs, BLM now has the audacity to suggest that it has the authority to close and rehabilitate roads forming the boundaries between and

Comment Letter 19

around WSAs and roads included within the boundaries of WSAs. The confirming pronouncement in this regard appears on page 4-5 of the draft:

> "Closing all of the cherrystem roads and rehabilitating them to a near natural condition would improve the management situation by eliminating motor vehicle access. An indirect effect of this action would be the enhancement of naturalness and the increased opportunities for solitude within the areas. Approximately 62 miles of roads would need to be rehabilitated to a near natural condition. This would require the use of mechanized equipment on the majority of those roads. Mechanized equipment would be needed to rip the roads, re-contour the disturbed area, and seed it with native vegetation. On some roads natural processes, such as plant invasion and weathering, could be allowed to run their course and result in satisfactory rehabilitation. In other cases natural rehabilitation would not occur over the long-term because of the dry climate." (underscoring added)

Such a blatant disregard of the clear and unequivocal language of the law and the rights of the users of the public lands cannot be tolerated or persisted. If any given 5000 acre parcel contains a road of any description, such parcel cannot be consided for wilderness, by definition of law. Even the presence of roads in the vicinity of a WSAs should cast serious doubts on the suitability of area for wilderness.

The definition of wilderness in the Wilderness Act refers to wilderness as "an area of undeveloped land retaining its primeval character and influence..." the presence of roads in, on or about such an area totally obscures the area's "primeval character and influence" and disqualifies it for wilderness consideration. The proliferation of roads, readily visible from any of the nine WSAs, should and must disqualifyall of such areas as wilderness.

The closure of 62 miles of roads engulfed by the WSAs, borders on criminal conduct. Differentiating between "roads" and "ways in plain stupidity.

The BLM admits that these roads are an integral part of outdoor recreational use in the resource area and, in light of the large number of mining sites and areas of known or potential mineral value, as well as grazing privileges in the resource area, said road unequivocally have great value for use by prospectors, miners, ranchers and farmers, as well as those seeking outdoor recreation and other pursuits.

Closure of said roads would drastically affect all of the "principal or major uses" of the area.

Since the suitability of the subject WSAs for wildgrness is, at best, questionable, choosing a course of action which will have such an adverse effect on all six principal or major uses under the circumstances, raises some serious doubts as to the competency of the BLM to conduct an effective wilderness program.

The intent of Congress in authorizing the Secretary to conduct a review of the public lands to identify potential wilderness areas obviously does not include "fabricating" wilderness where wilderness does not exist. Any attempt to do so, such as, but not limited to, the inclusion of existing roads, disregarding man-made improvements, including lands in active mining districts and of known mineral potential and including lands extensively used by the general public, is a misuse of the authority so granted.

19-7 4. In its attempt to justify the existence of the subject WSAs and the greatly excessive areas of public land included in the WSAs, the BLM, without the benefit of statutory or any other authority, has created a scheme advocating "diversity" in the wilderness system. Hence, it is now acceptable to consider areas for wilderness solely because of some ecosystem or landform classification that is not represented in the existing wilderness system.

On page 4-13 of the draft, the BLM expounds on this concept, suggesting that the nation's populace would be greatly deprived unless it had a wilderness area containing "pinyon - juniper woodland ecosystems" or a "Great Basin sagebrush ecosystems", or some other ecosystem or landform characteristic. Presumably, the lack of such an ecosystem in the wilderness system would justify the designation of an area containing such an ecosystem as wilderness even though the area did not otherwise meet wilderness criteria.

19-8 There is nothing in the language of FLPMA or the Wilderness Act that even remotely hints of such nonsense. Wilderness exists (if indeed it exists at all) where it is found and as it is found, regardless of "ecosystems" "landforms" or whatever. One might perceive a national park being created on the basis of such nature that it requires protection, such as the redwoods or the organ-pipe cactus, but such a concept has no place in the identification of public lands for wilderness potential.

In addition to the ecosystem, landform, etc. diversity concept, the BLM also proposes that there must be parity in geographical distribution of wilderness areas throughout the public lands. Hence, every population center in city having a population of 100,000, or more) should have available to it opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation (i.e. a wilderness area) within the range of a day's drive (5 hours).

The lesson to be learned from such proposals by the BLM is that the BLM is wholly oblivious to the meaning or the concept of wilderness and, in the course of completely ignoring the definition of wilderness, as set forth in the Wilderness Act and FLPMA, has generated a totally new concept which results in the creation of vast pockets of valuable public land which are, for all practical purposes, dedicated solely to the use and benefit of the youth culture for the purpose of infrequent and limited opportunities for the enjoyment of solitude or primitive or unconfined recreation. Can our nation be so extravagant as to condone the use of valuable resources

19-5 The decisions on roadless areas have been challenged in several Interior Board of Lands Appeals (IBLA) actions. At least two were directly related to determination made in the Tonopah Resource Area; IBLA 81-540, Walter Benoit (3/01/82) and IBLA 81-541, 81-1095, State of Nevada et al (3/03/82). Both decisions upheld and reaffirmed the Bureau's process of cherry-stemming and the evaluation of such areas during the study process.

19-6 It is not the Bureau's policy to arbitrarily close all roads in or near WSAs. However, in certain circumstances after careful consideration, it may become necessary to close roads to adequately manage a designated wilderness area. These types of actions will be described in wilderness management plans developed after Congressional designation. Although road closure and rehabilitation has been analyzed in this document under a manageability alternative, it is not anticipated that closures would occur unless proven necessary.

Response Letter 19

19-7 The requirement to analyze how each WSA would contribute to the diversity of the National Wilderness Preservation System is contained in the BLM Wilderness Study Policy, published on February 3, 1981.

19-8 Unique ecosystems contribute to the values of an area for scenic, naturalness, and aforntimes recreation opportunities. It is not only the ecosystems, but other values present which are evaluated as a whole in making recommendations for wilderness. It is also true that wilderness designation can provide valuable protection for unique and fragile ecosystems.

for such a purpose? In light of all the problems confronting our country at the present time, with little hope for relief in the near future, the answer must be a resounding, NO!

The BLM must be compelled to administrater the public lands in a competent manner, consistent with the provisions of FLPMA and other relevant statutes. This nation cannot afford to dedicate 200,000,000 acres of public land to non-use.

5. Although the language of both FLPMA and the Wilderness Act appears to convey the impression that wilderness and mining are compatible, it is difficult to determine whether such language is meant to allow the creation of more wilderness areas or to offer some degree of recognition to the importance of the mining industry.

On the face of it, to say that wilderness and mining are compatible is like saying inebriated drivers are compatible with highway safety. Drunk driver do, of course, drive and it is conceivable that a company could conduct mining operations in wilderness areas, even under the stringent and confining terms of Forest Service and BLM regulations. However, the great cost of the home wrecked by drunken drivers and the cost and frustration of mining activities conducted in wilderness areas, militate against the possibility that either drunk drivers or the conduct of mineral related activities in wilderness areas will gain much popularity.

Which then leads us to the question of whether this nation's needs lean toward wilderness or a viable, healthy mining industry.

FLMPA requires that the Geological Survey and the Bureau of Mines determine "the mineral values, if any, that may be present..." on wilderness candidate areas prior to the time that the areas are submitted to Congress for approval or disapproval of wilderness designation by that body. It is not clear, however, just what result the presence of "mineral values" will effect. Will the presence of "mineral values" disqualify the area as wilderness or will such presence be merely one of several factors that Congress will consider in

Comment Letter 19

designating or refusing to designate a Wilderness area? If the latter is true, of what value is the mineral determination? Very few mine operators can afford to or even desire to conduct mining operations under the thumb of Forest Service or BLM.

It would seem that rational land planning procedures would require that any area of the public land having mineral potential or being in a recognized mining district or being in the vicinity of mining activity would be given a low priority for consideration as a wilderness study area. Mining activity means, among other things, roads, clearings, dust, noise , improvements, and man's presence for at least an extended visit - all of which are anathemas to wilderness.

19-9 Since the conduct of mining related activity is impractical, if not economically impossible, on designated wilderness areas, and "mineral exploration and production" is a principal or major use of the public lands, the effective and responsive land manager would elect to follow the dictates of the Mining and Minerals Policy Act of 1970 (30 U.S.C. 21a)) and opt for mineral exploration and production. Such a manager would recognize that mineral deposits do not last forever and that at some point in time, the area involved probably will return to a substantially natural condition. In the meantime, the nation will have received the benefit of a valuable resource and industry will have avoided the additional cost and frustration of complying with Forest Service and BLM wilderness oriented rules and regulations.

On the other hand, if the area of concern is of such nature that its wilderness characteristics demand its inclusion in the wilderness system, notwithstanding its mineral potential or amenability to other principal or major uses, the manager probably should initiate such action as would result in the submission of the area to Congress for consideration of designation.

However, a review of the draft submitted for the Tonopah Resource Area, reveals no such areas and it seems quite apparent that responsible management would require that any BMA embracing or being within the vicinity of actual or potential

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mineral values and mineral activities, be eliminated from further consideration for wilderness. Including in a WSA, or within the area of influence of any WSA, areas of mineral potential or activity, in addition to being poor management practice, seems to be nothing less than an invitation to controversy and chaos and an additional burden on those attempting to find, develop and mine valuable resources of vital importance to the nation as a whole.

A cursory glance at a map showing areas of mining activity and their relationship to the subject WSAs, should discourage even the most incapable and unresponsive manager from trying to reconcile the nature of such areas with the statutory definitions of wilderness.

While there may be an apparent desire for wilderness, it should not take 500,000 acres of land in the Tonopah Resource Area or 8,000,000 acres of land in the State of Nevada or 200,000,000 acres of land nationwide to satisfy that desire, especially at the expense of valuable natural resources, not the least of which are minerals and energy resources.

SUMMATION

A review of the Draft of Tonopah Preliminary Wilderness Recommendation Environmental Impact Statement reveals the following:

19-10 A. The BLM ignored the definition of Wilderness in conducting its wilderness program under the provisions of FLPMA.

B. The BLM did not follow the dictates of FLPMA concerning the preparation and maintenance of an inventory of the public lands and their resources and other values prior to conducting the wilderness review program.

C. The BLM failed to engage in any kind of land use planning, comprehensive or otherwise, while conducting the wilderness program.

Response Letter 19

19-9 Bureau of Land Management Managers are required to consider and follow all policy, law and regulations in regards to uses allowed on public lands.

19-10 The Wilderness Act gives us the definition of wilderness, guidelines for conducting the Wilderness Inventory were issued in the Wilderness Inventory Handbook (September 1978). These were the guide posts of the inventory for wilderness areas in Nevada. The FLPMA provides us with regulation for administering other uses on public lands. It does not speak to the determination of wilderness. Although these other uses and resource values were inventoried separately in 1978 in preparation for completion of the Management Framework Plan (MFP) for the Tonopah Resource Area. It is required that the wilderness plans be in accord with existing land use plans. Any designation of wilderness areas in the Tonopah Resource Area by Congressional action would constitute an amendment to the land use plan (Tonopah MFP). In effect, this wilderness document sets the groundwork for that amendment and is indeed a part of the land use planning system.

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Response Letter 19

19-11 D. The BLM neglected to consider what effect wilderness would have on the six principal or major uses of public lands in the surrounding areas when it established the subject WSAs.

E. The BLM ignored the "roadless" criteria, directed by statute, when identifying WSAs.

F. The BLM failed to take in account the six "principal or major uses" of the public lands when it established the subject WSAs.

G. The BLM acted in contradiction of the law, as well as the directives of the Secretary, by proposing the destruction of roads separating WSAs, roads defining the boundaries of WSAs and roads included within the boundaries of WSAs.

H. In its frenetic effort to establish WSAs, the BLM resorted to fabricating or manufacturing wilderness in areas unsuitable for wilderness consideration.

I. In conducting its wilderness program, the BLM considered wilderness to be the highest and best use of the public land and created the subject WSAs accordingly. 43 U.S.C.S. Sec.1702(l) does not list wilderness as one of the six "principal or major uses" of the public lands.

J. The BLM established the subject WSAs as though land included therein existed completely independent of and unaffected by surrounding public land. In other words, it established the WSAs in a land-use vacuum.

K. The WSAs, as proposed by BLM, will effectively destroy the outdoor recreation capacity of the resource area for use by the general public.

19-12 L. If the BLM is allowed to destroy 62 miles of roads in the resource area, as is proposed in the draft, the loss of such roads, in addition to the "ways" already

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eliminated, will greatly inhibit and restrict the development, use and enjoyment of all public lands in the resource area. Rights of way, (access) being a principal or major use of the public lands, must not be needlessly subordinated.

M. In general, the subject WSAs were constituted in contradiction of the law, of the principles of good land management and land use planning, the best interests of the general public and, most significantly, in contradiction of common sense.

While wilderness is a rather nebulous concept and probably exists more in the realm of the imagination or great expectations than in reality, thereby complicating the work of the BLM in identifying areas subject to the concept, non-the-less, no matter how complicated the task, the BLM's indifference to the express policy and intent of Congress as described in FLMPA, in conducting the wilderness program in the Tonopah Resource Area is inexcusable if not unlawful.

If the BLM's entire program is being conducted in the same manner, the whole program should be scrapped and redone at such time as the BLM has properly inventoried the public lands and is in a position to utilize effective land use planning procedures which will assure consideration of all factors necessary to reach a land use decision.

Sincerely yours,

E.A. Hollingsworth
Individually and on behalf of the
Nevada Miners and Prospectors
Association.

Response Letter 19

19-11 It is required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to consider and analyze the effects of a proposed action on the environment through an environmental analysis of said action and to display a comparative analysis of reasonable alternatives to the proposed action. In this environmental impact statement we have analyzed a range of alternatives, including a no action (no wilderness), all wilderness, partial wilderness, and a proposed action. Under each of these , various actions and their effects have been evaluated, including effects on existing and projected developments, existing and projected resource uses, and management of wilderness through closure and rehabilitation of roads. These are all reasonable and viable alternatives to the proposed action, and will provide decisionmakers with the required information to make rational decisions on the designation of wilderness.

19-12 The effect of wilderness designation on access is analyzed in this EIS under ORV uses, mineral resources, and grazing facility maintenance and construction as it relates to these uses. No other uses were determined to be affected by road closures.

Comment Letter 20

Sierra Pacific Power Company

MAX L. JONES, JR.
Senior Vice President
Planning & Engineering

July 8, 1982

Mr. Leslie A. Monroe
Tonopah Resource Area Manager
Bureau of Land Management
PO Box 911
Tonopah, NV 89049

RE: Tonopah Draft Preliminary Wilderness Recommendation - Environmental Impact Statement
SPPCo Ref: EAD:82-046

Dear Mr. Monroe:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is to be congratulated for its efforts to balance resource production and conservation/preservation in its preliminary wilderness recommendations. The proposed land use plan does not conflict with Sierra's present utility facilities or with utility planning corridors for future use.

Sierra Pacific does not however support the provisions of your preferred alternative relating to combining wilderness study areas and identifying mineral potential. Sierra has been a long time supporter of the mining and energy industry's position that mineral evaluation must be completed prior to forwarding wilderness recommendations to the Secretary of Interior. We would prefer your alternative entitled "Emphasis on Resource Development Alternative".

The BLM preferred alternative poses two specific concerns to Sierra--related energy industries and the mining industry.

20-1 The proposal to combine the Fandango (NV-060-190) and Morey (NV-060-191) units and subsequently obliterating the Six Mile Canyon Road is an attempt to create an intermediate area of artificial wilderness which we do not feel was the intent of Congress when the directive was given to BLM to conduct an inventory of BLM land and provide recommendations for consideration as future wilderness areas. Additionally, the Six Mile Canyon Road has been in use for many years and is of future value for multiple use access.

The Fandango, Morey and South Reveille units have been shown to have speculative mineral potential, yet without the benefit of a mineral survey, have been recommended for further wilderness consideration. Mineral surveys should be conducted on these units prior to recommending them as suitable for wilderness designations. The premature recommendation

P. O. BOX 10100/RENO, NEVADA 89520/TELEPHONE 702/784-4600

Comment Letter 20

20-2 of these areas as wilderness could potentially eliminate mineral resources from future exploration and development. We recommend that a mineral survey of these areas be performed before a decision as to wilderness suitability is made.

Thank you for the opportunity to express these views as a part of your proposed land use plan amendments pertaining to wilderness.

Sincerely,

Max L. Jones, Jr.

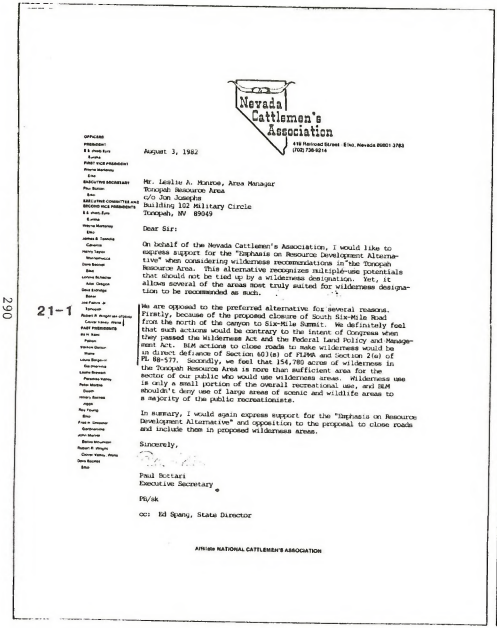
MLJ/MPS:r

Response Letter 20

20-1 The alternatives which analyzed the closure of South Sixmile Road and combining the Nemy and Pendango WSAs was developed to enhance wilderness values which exist in both areas. It was not designed to "create" wilderness. Decisions regarding roadless areas have been challenged in Interior Board of Lands Appeals in the past. The Bureau's process of cherrystemming and evaluation of such areas during the study phase have been upheld.

20-2 Mineral resources survey reports will be prepared by the U.S. Geological Survey and Bureau of Mines prior to making the final recommendation on suitable areas.

Comment Letter 21



Nevada Cattlemen's Association

410 Railroad Street · Elko, Nevada 89801-3763
(702) 738-9214

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Elko

August 3, 1982

Mr. Leslie A. Monroe, Area Manager
Tonopah Resource Area
c/o Jon Josephs
Building 102 Military Circle
Tonopah, NV 89049

Dear Sir:

On behalf of the Nevada Cattlemen's Association, I would like to express support for the "Emphasis on Resource Development Alternative" when considering wilderness recommendations in the Tonopah Resource Area. This alternative recognizes multiple-use potentials that should not be tied up by a wilderness designation. Yet, it allows several of the areas most truly suited for wilderness designation to be recommended as such.

21-1 We are opposed to the preferred alternative for several reasons. Firstly, because of the proposed closure of South Six-Mile Road from the north of the canyon to Six-Mile Summit. We definitely feel that such actions would be contrary to the intent of Congress when they passed the Wilderness Act and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act. BLM actions to close roads to make wilderness would be in direct defiance of Section 603(a) of FLPMA and Section 2(a) of PL 88-577. Secondly, we feel that 154,780 acres of wilderness in the Tonopah Resource Area is more than sufficient area for the sector of our public who would use wilderness areas. Wilderness use is only a small portion of the overall recreational use, and BLM shouldn't deny use of large areas of scenic and wildlife areas to a majority of the public recreationists.

In summary, I would again express support for the "Emphasis on Resource Development Alternative" and opposition to the proposal to close roads and include them in proposed wilderness areas.

Sincerely,

Paul Bottari
Executive Secretary

PB/sk

cc: Ed Spang, State Director

AFiliate NATIONAL CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Response Letter 21

21-1 Please refer to response #12-3 to Minerals Exploration Coalition.

Comment Letter 22

1835 Brisbane
Reno, Nevada 89503
July 5, 1982

Leslie Monroe, Manager
Tonopah Resource Area
P. O. Box 911
Tonopah, Nevada 89049

Dear Mr. Monroe:

As a fisherman and a lover of the outdoors (this is part of the reason I moved to Nevada), I am happy about the recommendations for wilderness you made in the Tonopah Resource Area. This is indeed wild country and needs to be protected under the Wilderness System. At the same time I support a strong mining program because I know we need minerals. It seems to me that your plan has succeeded in keeping both of these values.

I also support strongly the closing of the Six Mile Canyon road which completely ruins the only trout stream in that area.

Sincerely,

Al Richards

Comment Letter 23

630 Chaney Street
Reno, Nevada 89502
July 6, 1982

Leslie Monroe, Area Manager
Tonopah Resource Area
P. O. Box 911
Tonopah, Nevada 89049

Dear Mr. Monroe:

As a resident of Nevada for almost forty years, I am very much concerned about the preservation of its natural values for my children and future grandchildren to enjoy. Consequently, I am pleased with the wilderness recommendations of the Tonopah Resource area and believe that these areas will make an excellent addition to the wilderness system.

Please add this letter of support to your Public Hearing Record for the Draft EIS.

Sincerely yours,

Evangeline Schon

Evangeline Schon

Comment Letter 24

5865 Mt. Rose Highway
Reno, Nevada 89511
July 6, 1982

Mr. Leslie Monroe, Manager
Tonopah Resource Area, BLM
P. O. Box 911
Tonopah, Nevada 89049

Dear Mr. Monroe:

I wish to express my support for the Tonopah wilderness area recommendations as outlined in the Draft EIS. These are truly wild areas and will make an important addition to the National Wilderness System. These desert mountains of Nevada are a unique resource and need to be preserved in a natural state.

Sincerely,

JoAnne Peden

JoAnne Peden

Comment Letter 25

NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS TASK FORCE
NEVADA OUTDOOR RECREATION ASSOCIATION, INC

July 7, 1982

Leslie A. Monroe
Area Manager
Tonopah Resource Area
U.S. Bureau of Land Management
P.O. Box 911
Tonopah, Nevada 89049

P.O. Box 1245
Carson City, Nevada 89702

Subject: Draft; Tonopah Supplementary Wilderness Recommendations EIS.

Dear Mr. Monroe:

While this organization began its inventories of the Nevada BLM Public Lands in 1958, our efforts in the Tonopah BLM Resource Area date from the early 1960s--in which we carefully catalogued prime wilderness candidates into our NOAA Index & Survey all but one of the wilderness study areas (WSAs) promulgated on December 15, 1980.

25-1 While we recognize that the nine(9) WSAs totalling 488,890 acres as outstanding candidates for inclusion into the National Wilderness Preservation System, we have reservations concerning your NEPA recommendations and USGS criteria for determining so-called "mineral conflicts" in the WSAs concerned. Early in this WSA proceeding, we had occasion to register a strong protest to the use of MX Missile connected mineral studies--such as the Fugro Study--which based its data almost entirely on speculative mineral information. In fact, such studies had failed to produce one tangible ounce of valuable, in-place metals and minerals. Not only that, we are doubly concerned over the fact that only WSA mineral data is used--and not compared with overall mineral data on all lands--whether recommended or not as WSAs--in the Tonopah BLM Resource Area. We find this discriminatory, out of keeping with legitimate multiple use criteria and doubtful legality under FLPMA Section 603.

25-2 Since the beginning of our "Nevada Public Domain Survey" in the late 1950s, we had a least three persons with expertise in geology(I, myself, am a geologist--with a B.S. degree from the University of Nevada/Reno), carefully screen these, our own proposals from known or suspected valuable minerals. Indeed, we adjusted boundaries on such proposals as Morey Peak, to eliminate mineral conflicts. For over 20 years, we are completely satisfied--that these nine proposals, if enacted by the Congress, would not impinge on the mineral industry of Nevada.

We wish to see not repeated, the now notorious incident at Mount Wheeler, Humboldt National Forest, of August 1964. There, because of a highly speculative "discovery" of Beryllium, a national park was scuttled and the world's oldest living tree--a 4,965 year old bristlecone pine--was cut down! It was later discovered that the so-called "discovery" on Mt.

(continued)

Founded 1958
HONORARY LIFE MEMBERS
Charles W. Moore, Jr.
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Nye Bilbow
Reno, Nevada
Harry Lawrence
Elko, Nevada
Stephen R. Ellison
Reno, Nevada
Lynn Dorsey
Las Vegas, Nevada
Howard Hall
Las Vegas, Nevada
Herbert Walker
Grand Junction, Colorado
Harold S. Barnes
Jamestown, North Dakota
Hugh L. McMillan
Hudson, New York
Jerome Dorsey
Reno, Nevada
Richard Engel
New York, New York
Marion Nil
Reno, Nevada
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Boise, Idaho
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Bird and Mirror Land
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William Mayer
Reno, Nevada
Harold Hall
Reno, Nevada
Ann Mayer
Reno, Nevada
Walter J. Lamb
Pasadena, California
Hope Jelich
Reno, Nevada
Diamond Pat
San Francisco, California
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Fresno, California
Lucille H. Crawford
Sterling, Wisconsin

IN MEMORIAM

(NORA Founders)
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Spanish Springs, Nevada
George Lynd
Gardnerville, Nevada
George Rod
Spanish Springs, Nevada
Lucius Beebe
Reno, Nevada
Edward Dickinson
Genoa, Nevada
Howard Dellon
Genoa, Nevada
James D. Hulse Jr.
Thistle, Nevada
Paul M. Tibbs
Bethesda, Maryland
George Dickey
Potomac, Washington
Lucinda Lamp
St. Louis, Missouri
Lloyd E. Freeman
St. Thomas, Maryland
(NPLTF Founders)

Comment Letter 25

wheeler consisted of a small pegmatite lens lined with quartz crystals. On only a fraction of these crystals were found only a hundred or so tiny white "nubbers" of a mineral called Herderite--a Calcium Beryllium Fluoro-phosphate. This infamous "fabulous and strategic find" failed to put one miner to work in the ensuing 18 years, while killing a fine national park which would have benefitted White Pine County. To this day, the reputation of the U.S. Forest Service grevious ly suffers in Nevada because of this 1964 bristlecone cutting incident....and a prime factor in this agency having to repeat its wilderness studies under RARE II.

25-3 We raise this subject, because of the find this organization made of a truly astonishing bristlecone pine(Pinus longaeva) forest on the flanks of Morey Peak. We believe this find may be more unique than that of the Snake Range--since it is the only occurrence known on volcanic rock. Indeed, subsequent revelations have shown the existence of desert-bound waterfalls(one over 1,000 feet), ancient archeology, and truly magnificent Great Basin wilderness experiences. Both John Muir and Mark Twain used their best prose to describe the exquisite wonders these wilderness areas possessed.

Such language equally applies to such WSAs as Kawich Peak and South Reveille. At Kawich Peak, there are densely forested(pinyon, juniper & mountain mahogany) and rugged ridges--replete with mountain lakes. Abundant wildlife and splendid scenic character. We cannot understand--and strenuously protest--any recommendation which fails to recognize this 54,320-acre proposal. Similarly, we have visited the Area Office and extolled the virtues of the valley and alluvial fans approaches to 8,900-ft. Reveille Peak. We are sorely distressed over the fact that this is one of the few such WSAs with this topography. We believe, based on our 20 years experience in this area, that Reveille Valley must be included into the South Reveille WSA proposal.

We concur with the combining of Fandango and Morey Peak units. The closure of a "way" separating these units must be affected to protect not only wilderness values--but insure against continued irreparable damage to an endangered fisheries habitat and critical riparian vegetation areas.

25-4 Both Palisade Mesa and The Wall have been extensively investigated by the MORA Index and Survey over a period of 20 years. These areas have since been shown to be one of the Southwest's prime raptor areas for rare predatory birds, including the Bald Eagle, our nation's symbol. All this is in addition, to strange and weird volcanic formations which have been compared to the surface of the moon. We refer to miriads of recent lava flows, craters and volcanic effects.

All nine of the WSAs are some of the most deserving now under consideration on BLM Public Lands. Indeed, this organization submitted detailed studies on some of these areas in the 1970s--most notably, Morey Peak and Blue Eagle Mountain. These should be on file in both the state BLM office and the Area Office. The Blue Eagle Mountain study is typical of the remarkable natural splendibidy we have consistently found in these WSAs. Here, our researcher, Nick Van Pelt, found another treasure-trove of bristlecone pines, awesome mountain escarpments, bighorn sheep habitat and a strange occurrence of dwarf white fir. This is why the bureau must adopt the all wilderness recommendation for these nine areas.

Respectfully submitted,
Charles S. Watson
Charles S. Watson, Jr., Director

Response Letter 25

25-1 The mineral data used to determine the recommendation for each WSA was the best available data. It included the evaluation of existing developments and claims, as well as the PSCRO report and U.S. Geological Survey input. A final mineral inventory will be completed to determine more fully the potential of mineral resources prior to designation of wilderness.

25-2 It is not entirely true that only the mineral data inside the WSA was used. All of the data from areas near the WSA was also reviewed, however, the WSAs had to be judged on the potential recognized within each.

25-3 The bristlecone pine on Morey Peak and the raptor areas in Palisade Mesa and the Wall WSAs have been evaluated in the final EIS.

25-4 All of these special features of the WSA were identified and discussed in Chapter Three of the final EIS, and Chapter Four of the final EIS under wilderness values.

Comment Letter 26

CITIZENS FOR MINING

POST OFFICE BOX 256 BATTLE MOUNTAIN, NEVADA 89820

6-5-82

DRAFT TONOPAH PRELIMINARY WILDERNESS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

AFTER REVIEWING THESE NINE WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS,AND THE MINERAL STUDIES THAT WERE MADE A PART OF THEM, WE HAVE TO GO ON RECORD AS OPPOSING ALL OF THE STUDY AREAS FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS.

IT WOULD APPEAR THAT MOST OF THE STUDY AREAS, ARE OF THE"MANUFACTURED WILDERNESS CATEGORY", MEANING BY HAVING SOMETHING WITHIN EACH AREA, WHICH DOES NOT MEET THE ORIGINAL WILDERNESS CRITERIA.

SUCH AS, SOME HAVE PRIVATE DEEDED LAND SCATTERED THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE STUDY AREA, OLD ROADS THAT WERE "CHOKNT-STEMMED" ORIGINALLY ARE CRISS-CROSSING MOST OF THE STUDY AREAS AND WE DON'T SEE HOW THIS CAN MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF WILDERNESS CRITERIA, EVEN IF THE PRIVATE LAND WAS BOUGHT, AND THE ROADS WERE RE-SEEDED, AS THE LAW CLEARLY STATES, THAT TO QUALIFY, THE LAND MUST HAVE NEVER BEEN TRAMPLED ON BY MAN.

ON THE MINERAL PART OF THE STUDY, WE HAVE TO TAKE EXCEPTION TO THE MANNER IN WHICH IT WAS DONE. THE "FUNGO" STUDY WAS DONE IN A REAL BUSH TYPE SITUATION, TO SATISFY THE U.S. AIR FORCE FOR THE "MX" SCARE AND AS FAR AS WE ARE CONCERNED IT IS ABOUT WORTHLESS, AS IT TAKES FROM 5 TO 10 YEARS TO EVALUATE A MINING PROPERTY AND GET IT INTO PRODUCTION.

GRANTED, THE U.S.G.S. DOES A FINE JOB OF FIELD RECONNAISSANCE,MAP -MAKING AND EVALUATING DIFFERENT STRUCTURES OF WHOLE MOUNTAIN RANGES IN DIFFERENT LOCALITIES. AS FAR AS THEY CAN GO WITH THEIR PERSONAL BEING ON THE LIMITED NUMBER SIDE, IT WILL BE DECADES BEFORE THEY WILL BE ABLE TO COVER AND REPORT THE VAST AREAS OF LAND IN THE WESTERN STATES.

THE MOST CONCERN WE HAVE WITH THESE STUDY AREAS, IS HOW CLOSE THE BOUNDARIES ARE TO OLD MINING PROPERTIES AND DISTRICTS THAT HAVE YIELDED PRODUCTION, EVEN 60 TO 100 YEARS AGO, SO THEY CAN NOT BE CLASSIFIED AS PROSPECTS. EVEN IN YOUR DIAGRAMS, YOU HAVE GOOD MINERAL POTENTIAL LAND WHOLLY WITHIN THE STUDY AREA. YOU SHOULD NEVER HAVE ANY KNOWN MINERAL BEARING LAND EVEN CLOSE TO A WILDERNESS STUDY AREA.

Comment Letter 26

DRAFT TONOPAH PRELIMINARY WILDERNESS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

ONE MORE THING TO MAKE ABSOLUTELY NOT NECESSARILY GO IN A STRAIGHT LINE, SO SOME OF THESE OLD MINES MAY EXTEND FOR A FEW MILES OVER INTO YOUR STUDY AREAS. AND IF THESE STUDY AREAS GET INTO THE WILDERNESS SYSTEM, WE WILL NEVER KNOW IF THE ORE BODY DID, IN FACT, GO OVER INTO THE STUDY AREA AS WE WILL NEVER BE ALLOWED TO FIND OUT THAT FACT.

EVEN THOUGH YOU KEEP TELLING US THAT WE CAN MINE IN A WILDERNESS, IT HAS ALREADY BEEN PRETTY WELL PROVEN THAT IT IS UNECONOMICAL TO TRY THAT, DUE TO THE ACCESS RULES, REGULATIONS AND SEVERE RESTRICTIONS THAT ARE PUT ON THAT TYPE OF OPERATION, FOR A LARGE MINING COMPANY OR SMALL MINER, EITHER CASE.

Donald Smith

DONALD SMITH
PRESIDENT
CITIZENS FOR MINING

Comment Letter 27

June 11, 1982

Lane Simonian
2600 W. Moana Lane
Reno, Nevada 89509

Dear Sirs:

Overall, I'm pleased with the Tonopah District's recommendations regarding wilderness areas. However, some of the most scenic areas have been unfairly excluded from wilderness consideration because of inconclusive studies which indicate high mineral potential. Even if these lands are actually rich in mineral resources, they shouldn't be automatically excluded from wilderness consideration. Wilderness itself is an important resource; a resource whose value and necessity hasn't been fully appreciated.

Sincerely Yours,

Lane Simonian

Comment Letter 28

Lockie & Hoover
BLM
Tonopah

Dear Mr. Hoover

I would like to comment on your draft E.I.S.

As a background to comments, specifically aimed at field 1.2.2 the Quality of our outdoor recreation area should first be based on the Resources available, basic of the landscape, lack of population, remoteness (approximately 34 miles, adventuring by lack of roads etc.) Range WSA visual, & topography have gone to be one of the most outstanding in the West. Plus yet your WSA is 15% or slightly less than the National average. Your proposed alternative suggests leaving more only one fourth in here.

I cannot therefore support this alternative.

In view of other statistics, I would further ask if you are really sure that outstanding areas were not left out from inventory?

As for consideration of specific units, areas should be protected in they are outstanding & dropped if they are not.

Good more commentaries therefore all areas are outstanding except Rawhide. Rawhide should therefore be dropped. The Front Range unit should be given to the Forest Service for RARE II

OVER

Comment Letter 28

everything else should being [illegible]

I appreciate the opportunity to comment & hope opportunity being kept abreast of developments.

Very truly

George Lockie
Box 18
Park Ridge
Illinois
60068

Comment Letter 29

GARRATT GEOSERVICES

GARRATT GEOSERVICES LTD.
2640 SKEENA DRIVE
KAMLOOPS, B.C. CANADA V2E 1V5
(604) 372-7085

GARRATT GEOSERVICES U.S.A. INC.
P.O. BOX 1084
ELY, NEVADA U.S.A. 89301
(702) 289-3411

June 4, 1982
Ely, Nevada

Mr. Leslie A. Monroe
Area Manager
P.O. Box 911
Tonopah, Nevada 89049

Re: Morey Wilderness Study Area

Dear Mr. Monroe,

Our company is currently involved in a mineral exploration program within and adjacent to the proposed Morey Wilderness Area. The region has great potential for economic deposits of gold, silver, manganese, molybdenum, tin and bismuth. Roads within the area are currently being used for access and evaluation.

It is our opinion that a wilderness area in the district would be a serious detriment to all involved. It is our hope that an economic mineral deposit can be developed in the near future to benefit the economy and people of this region.

Sincerely,

J. Stephen Garratt

J. Stephen Garratt
Exploration Geologist

On behalf of Garratt Geoservices

JSG/bh

ALASKA — CANADA — WESTERN U.S.

Comment Letter 30

Mr. Les Monroe
Tonopah Resource Area
Tonopah, Nv. 89049

4848 Andrews Rd.
Medford, Oregon 97501
June 29, 1982

Dear Sir:

My name is Meryl Romeyn and as a citizen I would like to comment on the Draft Tonopah Preliminary Wilderness Recommendations RIS. Of the alternatives proposed, I find the Emphasis on Manageability alternative to be the wisest use of the public lands in question.

I base this recommendation on my findings as presented in the RIS. A very telling statistic is the percentage of the Tonopah Resource Area recommended for wilderness designation, page 2-2. The proposed action calls for only 6.5% of the area to be held as Wilderness. Under the Manageability alternative the figure is 11.6%. Is that too much? Only 11.6% of this vast area to be left untouched by the hand of man. This leaves over 85% of the area open to almost any activity that one wishes to pursue. The developmental interests make so much noise about locking up the land, yet in my dealings a 50% - 50% split is fair.- and what activities truely lock up the land? Perhaps a 70% -30% split would be acceptable to industry, but the Manageability alternative commits only 11.6% of the resource area to wilderness - and it allows for the majority of good and high potential areas for gas, oil, and geothermal in the WSA's to be open for development, page 2-15. Furthermore, present livestock use would be allowed to continue.

The preferred alternative is inadequate. Only a fraction of the resource area would be committed to Wilderness. This alternative seems to delete acreage that is of any potential commercial worth. Conflicts are decided in favor of the competing interests to preservation. A case in point is the South Reveille WSA. At 106,200 acres, this is a big wilderness, with all the associated benefits of a large area. There are not to many large untouched areas left, and the South Reveille offers diverse scenery and represents several ecosystems. Clearly it needs to be saved, yet under the proposed action only the 35,000 acre mountain core is recommended for Wilderness. Gone are the valley and foothill portions which are integral to the core. The proposed Wilderness would be like a dying man - only a shadow of it's former self.

Comment Letter 30

I do find the recommended action concerning the Morey area to be well advised. The closure of the S. -Ixmile road does create a manageable wilderness. The benefits of wilderness are long term and far-reaching. I urge you to re-evaluate your preffered alternative and instead opt for a decision which balances the competing interests and promotes good, sound management for America's public land. I promote the alternative that stresses en emphasis on manageability. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Daryl Romeyn

Comment Letter 31

June 7, 1982

Bureau of Land Mgt
1405 Kings Row
Reno, NV 89503

Statement on "Tonopah Preliminary Wilderness Recommendations EIS"

I am pleased to be here to testify in support of the preferred alternative which recommends designation of 5 areas within the Tonopah Resource Area (Morey/Pandango, Palisade Mesa, The Wall, South Reveille, & Blue Eagle).

The EIS has substantiated the wilderness character of these outstanding lands. The management decisions are clear. I particularly concur with the proposed closure of the destructive jeep road in south Six Mile Canyon. The plan to recommend non-wilderness on lands of obvious resource conflict where they occur on the margins of the defined wilderness boundaries is logically sound.

31-1 I disagree with the preferred alternative and the EIS, in general, in two areas. 1) The minerals survey data which is being used to establish mineral resource conflicts is at best speculative. It should not be used to justify a non-wilderness recommendation since the area being considered relative to the size of the RA is so small. 2) The Kawich WSA should be added to the wilderness recommendation (as defined in the Management Alternative) since it is being eliminated based on the minerals survey.

The mineral possibilities of all recommended wilderness lands must be studied by the USGS prior to its final approval by Congress. This survey will identify severe conflicts at that time. Therefore, there is no need to withdraw Kawich, a locally known wilderness resource, due to this questionable minerals survey.

Overall, as the Draft EIS states, only 13.5% of the RA is being considered for possible wilderness recommendation.

Comment Letter 31

-2-

The preferred alternative plus Kawich (under the management alternative) represents only 7.7% of the RA. Simple Arithmetic reveals that 92.3% of the RA remains open to intensive mineral development, ORV use and the like. The small amount of wilderness protection being offerred in the Tonopah RA will have no significant effect on the development industries while protecting a precious National Heritage.

A final comment on the combining of the Pandango and Morey Peak WSA's by closing the "road" up S. Six Mile Creek. I have hiked the entire distance up S. Six mile, rested along its meadows and watched the trout dart to the nearest bank when a shadow is cast on the water. The closure is based on the manageability of the wilderness resource according to the EIS. With this I heartily concur. However, I would like to point out that this road is contributing to the severe degradation (livestock being the other) of this rare CN trout stream. The "road" should be closed immediately where the canyon entrance narrows and becomes a rubble of rocks washed down during flash floods without waiting for the adoption of final Wilderness Recommendations.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Dennis Ghiglieri

Response Letter 31

31-1 Wilderness designation, as stated in the Wilderness Act of 1964, provides for preservation of areas in an essentially natural condition for the future use and enjoyment of the public.

Comment Letter 32

Date 7, 1982

Bruce Blackstead
1505 Kings Row
Reno, NV 89503

Statement on "Tonopah Preliminary Wilderness Recommendations EIS"

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on the preliminary wilderness recommendations and the Draft Tonopah Wilderness Environmental Impact Statement. I would like to compliment the Battle Mountain District and the Tonopah R.A. staff for developing a clear and concise EIS which also adequately examines the environmental impacts of wilderness designation or non-designation.

I fully support the preferred alternative which is clearly and factually reasoned. The only addition I would take is that

32-1 which should be included in this alternative. The chief criticism is that the Fugro mineral study is superficial and was not intended for the purpose of this EIS. The U.S. Geological Survey must perform a thorough mineral survey after the final recommendation to Congress. The USGS study will be a more professional and supportable evaluation of mineral potential which Congress can then use in its deliberations.

The only other additions I have to the EIS concern the deficiencies in the section on socio-economic benefits of wilderness:

32-2 1. No attempt was made to quantify financial benefits of wilderness use, although all gas and perishables must be purchased in local communities;

32-3 2. a direct benefit of wilderness to livestock grazing is the potential decrease in vandalism and cattle rustling due to the decreased vehicular access to remote areas;

32-4 3. a major potential benefit of wilderness to livestock grazing and recreation is its protection of prime grazing and recreational lands from military projects such as the M-X missile and political schemes such as "privatization."

32-5 A clarification of the reasons for the closure of the road in South Six Mile Canyon should be made in the EIS. As I understand it, BLM intends or has already closed the road as part of a wildlife Habitat Management Plan. Although closing the

Comment Letter 32

Page 2

road certainly would improve wilderness manageability, the original benefits determined by BLM are to the fisheries and wildlife resources and to reduce the extensive erosion occurring in South Six Mile Canyon.

32-6 A question I have is why the Reno SRMA was not included on p.4-13 as it certainly is within one day's driving distance from most of the Tonopah wilderness areas. I would guess that the Tonopah wilderness areas will probably be more heavily used by Reno hikers, hunters, and campers than by Las Vegans.

Despite the above mentioned differences, I feel the draft Tonopah EIS is a very well written document and the BLM is to be commended for its very professional effort.

---0---

32-1 The data and finding of FUGRO National, Inc. (Now EXIXC) were felt to be the best information currently assembled and available. Mineral resources survey reports will also be prepared by the U.S. Geological Survey and Bureau of Mines on all areas with a preliminary recommendation as suitable for wilderness designation. This additional mineral resources information will become part of the information used by the Secretary of the Interior in making the final recommendation.

32-2 Data is not available to quantify the economic benefits of wilderness visitor use in central Nevada. However, the potential benefits in terms of increased visitor use is discussed in Chapter Four of the final EIS.

32-3 The livestock operators may receive benefit from lower vandalism rates, less livestock rustling, etc., which would be results of lower vehicle access. These benefits are not quantifiable or measurable, although they may exist.

32-4 Wilderness designation, as stated in the Wilderness Act of 1964, provides for preservation of areas in an essentially natural condition for the future use and enjoyment of the public.

Response Letter 32

32-5 The Morey Habitat Management Plan recommended closing the South Shoshone Canyon to livestock grazing and closure of the road to vehicle traffic. The impacts of closing roads are discussed in Chapter Four.

32-6 The Wilderness Study Areas are farther than one day's driving time (five hours) from Reno, Nevada. The five hour time is a requirement of the BLM Wilderness Study Policy.

Comment Letter 33

conoco

Minerals Department

Conoco Inc
910 Seventeenth Street
Denver, CO 80202
(303) 573-6000

July 7, 1982

Mr. Leslie A. Monroe
Tonopah Resource Area Manager
Building 102 Military Circle
P. O. Box 911
Tonopah, Nevada 89049

Dear Mr. Monroe:

I have reviewed the Draft Tonopah Preliminary Wilderness Recommendations Environmental Impact Statement and would like to comment on same.

Because wilderness classification will prevent exploration for and development of much needed mineral resources, I favor the Emphasis on Resource Development Alternative.

If the Preferred Alternative is selected those areas with good or high mineral potential should be excluded from wilderness classification.

Because of good mineral potential in the northeastern portion of the Morey (NV-060-193) area and undetermined mineral potential in the remainder of the area, I believe the entire Morey area should be excluded from wilderness consideration. Two areas of good mineral potential and undetermined mineral potential exist in the western portion of the Palisade Mesa (NV-060-142/162) area. Because of this the western half of the Palisade Mesa area should be excluded from wilderness consideration.

Very truly yours,

Gordon L. Pine

Gordon L. Pine
Senior Geologist

/brs
CC: E. F. Birdsall

Comment Letter 34

July 3, 1982

Mr. Lewis Benson, Manager
Tonopah Resource Area, BLM
P. O. Box 911
Tonopah, Nevada

Dear Mr. Benson:

I wish to support the wilderness selections made by the Tonopah Resource Area. All of the areas chosen by the BLM have high wilderness values and do not conflict seriously with other resources present in the Area. They will make excellent additions to our National Wilderness System.

I was disappointed that the Kawich Range WSA was not selected since it seems to be of the same high quality as the other areas and has few conflicts with other resources. Perhaps this particular WSA could be reconsidered in your final recommendations.

Thank you for your consideration of this statement.

Sincerely,

Marceline Carney

Marceline Carney
2180 Polk Street
Reno, NV 89501

Comment Letter 35

CANOREX INTERNATIONAL, INC.

#510, 840 6th Avenue S.W.
Calgary Alberta T2P 3E5
Canada
(403) 263-2886

#1200, 718 17th Street
Denver Colorado 80202
U.S.A.
(303) 825-0282

P.O. Box 61360
Johannesburg 2107
Republic of South Africa
(011) 838-6213

July 2, 1982

Mr. Leslie A. Munroe
Bureau of Land Management
Tonopah Resource Area Manager
P.O. Box 911
Tonopah, Nevada 89049

Re: Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Tonopah Resource Area

Dear Sir:

Our company is currently engaged in the active exploration of a block of claims in the Morey Peak area which at this stage appears very promising. The type of occurrence under investigation has the potential for a low-grade high-tonnage deposit which, if we are successful in establishing the presence of an economic deposit, would have tremendous economic benefits to the area.

35-1 The Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Tonopah Resource Area concerns me for three reasons. Firstly, even though our area of immediate interest only lies partially within the proposed WSA, I am concerned that the establishment of a Wilderness Area in the Morey Peak district will have a serious deleterious effect on any future development plans we might have.

Secondly, the prospective geology which hosts our mineralization continues into the proposed Morey Peak WSA and therefore has a high potential to host similar mineralization. The establishment of a Wilderness Area here would preclude any attempts by industry to explore and evaluate the mineral potential of the area.

35-2 Thirdly, I am disturbed that your proposals include the closures of existing roads. I believe that any attempt to "create" wilderness is contrary to the original intent of the Wilderness Act and that any such closure would have far-reaching implications and ramifications. There are sufficient pristine areas in the United States that properly qualify for designation as WSA's without artificially trying to create them.

I hope that you will seriously reconsider your proposals to establish the Morey Peak WSA. Thank you very much for your consideration of my comments.

Very truly yours,
CANOREX INTERNATIONAL, INC.

M. D. McInnis - Vice President

Response Letter 35

35-1 Areas where the mineral potential is either known or anticipated to be high were not recommended as wilderness, providing the wilderness values of the area were not of equal or higher value. In this case the wilderness values of Morey Peak were considerably higher than the potential mineral values. Should Morey be designated as wilderness, existing claims would be examined to determine validity and would be processed in accordance with existing regulations.

35-2 There are two important points to be addressed:

(1) The proposed action for this document does not recommend the closure of South Stimmle Road.

(2) The Wilderness Act of 1964 does not preclude the closing of cherrystem roads. This action was not taken to "create" wilderness, but rather to enhance wilderness values already in existence. Decisions on roadless areas have been challenged in Interior Board of Lands Appeals (IBLA) actions. At least two of these are directly related to the Tonopah Resource Area; IBLA 81-340, Walter Benoit (3/01/82) and IBLA 81-341, 81-1095, State of Nevada et al (3/23/82). Both decisions upheld the Bureau's process of cherrystemming and the evaluation of such areas during the study phase.

Comment Letter 36

Elko, Nev.
July 1, 1982

Dear Mr. Monroe,

I am writing you this letter in response to the draft EIS regarding mining in the Elko mountain District's Tonopah Resource Area.

I support your preferred alternative which recommends portions of the wilderness study areas (totaling 289,000 acres) to be included in National wilderness designation status. There are two areas which I would like to see added, however.

1) The Kawich Range [illegible] significant riparian communities as well as [illegible] peak itself.

2) Reveille Valley portion of the South Reveille WSA is one of the few Nevada valleys that still qualifies as wilderness. (This is a good example of the use of wilderness applied to an ecosystem, which is what the usual "lofty peak, rest area, pristine" rationale of Native Americans that is quickly being changed by man to almost everywhere else on the planet.)

Thank you

Terry Kea

304

Comment Letter 37

Kappes, Cassiday & Associates

P.O. Box [illegible], Reno, Nevada 89507 702 [illegible]
[illegible] Avenue, Reno, Nevada 89511 702 [illegible]

21 June, 1982

Mr. Leslie A. Monroe
Tonopah Resource Area Manager
Bureau of Land Management
P.O. Box 911
Tonopah, Nevada 89049

Dear Mr. Monroe:

As a small company (15 employees) based in Reno, we have been directly involved with the minerals industry in the western U.S. for the past ten years.

We would like to voice our strong protest against some of the features of your DEIS concerning the Tonopah Wilderness Study Areas. These features will have direct adverse impact not only on the mining industry, but on peripheral industries such as ours (we provide testing and field contract management services to the precious metals mining industry).

We would like to make the following points:

1. In Nevada, as in most of the western U.S., wilderness study areas, dirt tracks suitable for 4-wheel drive vehicle access, provide the sole necessary and productive means of access to these areas. The fact that these roads are not improved, does not lessen their legitimacy as valid roads. We strongly protest BLM's de-facto position that these means of access are not roads because they do not meet arbitrary improvement criteria. We request that you consider inclusion of a policy statement in the EIS that all such tracks will be maintained while such areas have Wilderness Study Status, and that entry on these roads, for valid purposes by the public, be maintained.

37-1 2. We would also like to state that it is our opinion, as an established small Nevada business, that your evaluation of the mineral potential of the Tonopah Wilderness Study Area is biased in favor of the "wilderness" use. It directly ignores the history of mineral development in this country whereby changing economics, production technology, and exploration ideas result in the finding of deposits of major national significance, in areas formerly considered to be devoid of potential.

Comment Letter 37

[illegible]

37-1 Your position on these issues is harmful to the mineral industry, and to the economic viability of small businesses in states such as Nevada, where much of the business activity is related to mining. We consider the MLS biased to the extent that it inadequately evaluates the effect of Wilderness Study Areas on small businesses and on mineral industry activities. We request that you revise the study to eliminate this bias.

Sincerely,

Daniel M. Kappes
KAPPES, CASSIDAY & ASSOCIATES

DMK/dt

cc: Ms. Joyce Hall
Senator Howard Cannon
Senator Paul Laxalt
Congressman James Santini

Response Letter 37

37-1 We do not feel the environmental impact statement is biased in favor of wilderness. The impacts of wilderness on mineral developments have been addressed in all areas where the mineral potential was sufficiently established or professionally estimated to be of value. This analysis took into consideration economic factors as well as location and accessibility. Where mineral potential was known to be high and wilderness values of the area were not equal or higher, the area was not recommended for wilderness designation.

Comment Letter 38

From the desk of

ANN M. HIBBS

Mr. Robert Nieman,

I am just wondering if supporting the areas of wilderness recommended by the BLM in the Preferred Alternative - plus the Roselle Valley & Kawich Ranges.

Sincerely,

Ann M. Hibbs

Comment Letter 39

June 26, 1987

Mr. Robert Nieman
Tonopah, Nevada 89049

Re: Wilderness Study Areas
Battle Mtn District
Tonopah Resource Area

RECEIVED
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
JUN 30 1987
TONOPAH RESOURCE AREA OFFICE

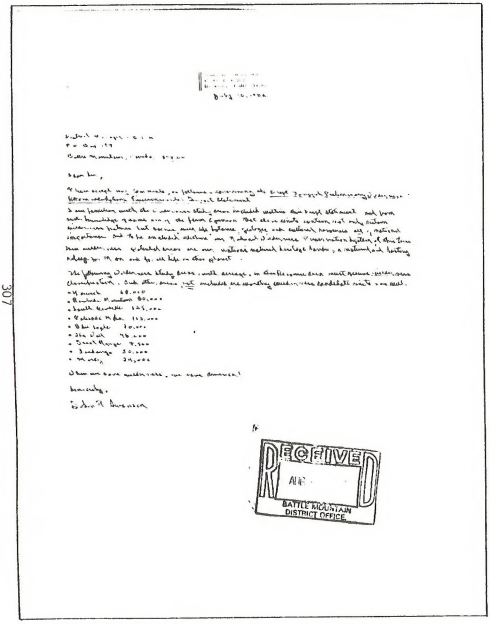
Dear Mr. Nieman,

I support the Preferred Alternative but would like the Kawich Range to be added to the plan. It would be wonderful if these beautiful areas would become part of the National Wilderness Preservation System.

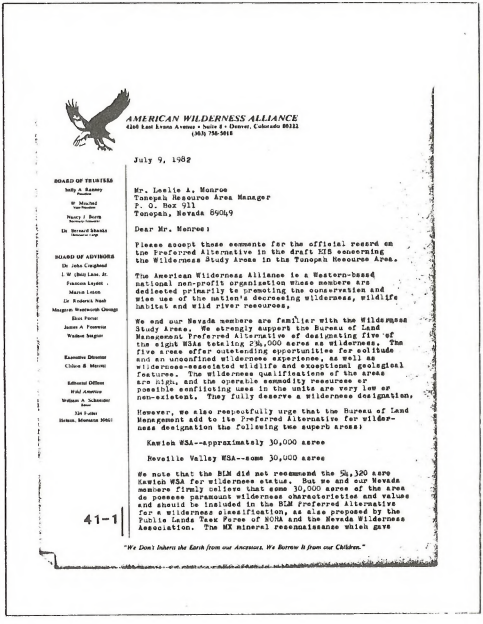
Sincerely,

A. J. Stevens
P.O. B 19176
Las Vegas, NV 89132

Comment Letter 40



Comment Letter 41



AMERICAN WILDERNESS ALLIANCE
4260 East Evans Avenue • Suite 8 • Denver, Colorado 80222
(303) 756-5010

July 9, 1982

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Mr. Leslie A. Monroe
Tonopah Resource Area Manager
P. O. Box 911
Tonopah, Nevada 89049

Dear Mr. Monroe:

Please accept these comments for the official record on the Preferred Alternative in the draft EIS concerning the Wilderness Study Areas in the Tonopah Resource Area.

The American Wilderness Alliance is a Western-based national non-profit organization whose members are dedicated primarily to promoting the conservation and wise use of the nation's decreasing wilderness, wildlife habitat and wild river resources.

We and our Nevada members are familiar with the Wilderness Study Areas. We strongly support the Bureau of Land Management Preferred Alternative of designating five of the eight WSAs totaling 236,000 acres as wilderness. The five areas offer outstanding opportunities for solitude and an unconfined wilderness experience, as well as wilderness-associated wildlife and exceptional geological features. The wilderness qualifications of the areas are high, and the operable commodity resources or possible conflicting uses in the units are very low or non-existent. They fully deserve a wilderness designation.

However, we also respectfully urge that the Bureau of Land Management add to its Preferred Alternative for wilderness designation the following two superb areas:

Kawich WSA--approximately 30,000 acres

Reveille Valley WSA--some 30,000 acres

41-1 We note that the BLM did not recommend the 56,320 acre Kawich WSA for wilderness status. But we and our Nevada members firmly believe that some 30,000 acres of the area do possess paramount wilderness characteristics and values and should be included in the BLM Preferred Alternative for a wilderness classification, as also proposed by the Public Lands Task Force of NCHA and the Nevada Wilderness Association. The MX mineral reconnaissance which gave

"We Don't Inherit the Earth from our Ancestors. We Borrow It from our Children."

Comment Letter 41

Mr. Lonzie A. Monroe, July 9, 1982, Page 2

41-1 the area a good rating for mineral potential was very superficial and speculative. No specific minerals are known to exist in the unit. In addition, the need to manipulate the vegetation in the juniper-type wildlife habitat of the area is highly questionable. Juniper and/or sagebrush removal is seldom permanent and often costly.

We believe that some 10,000 acres should be added to the BLM's recommendation for a Reveille Valley Wilderness. The proposed Wilderness would then encompass approximately 63,000 acres of the 106,000 acre WSA. The BLM recommendation contains the mountainous core of this wild tract. However, the additional 10,000 add acres that we have proposed would include more of the valley portion inherent in the name of the area, making the greater Wilderness more credible and viable. There are extremely few opportunities to establish large valley wilderneeeeee. The addition of the 10,000 acres of the WSA to the BLM's proposed 53,000 acre Reveille Valley Wilderness provides this exceptional opportunity. The additional acreage is without jeep roads and of high wilderness quality. Where possible, a wilderness recommendation should encompass a liberal cross-section of the wild landscape, not just the mountainous core. This provides a natural setting or foreground to the Wilderness and adds to its variety of terrain, as well as plant and animal life.

In addition, we strongly support the BLM's excellent recommendation to combine the Morey Jeep and Pendenga areas by closing the jeep road that separates the two areas. This jeep road crosses and re-crosses a valuable trout stream many times, and vehicle use is causing severe damage to the stream and the trout life. It should be noted that this is the only trout stream entirely on BLM lands within the Tonopah Resource Area. Moreover, bighorn sheep have been restored to the area, and grazing vehicle use from the greater area would benefit and enhance the recovery of this sensitive wilderness animal.

We note in this connection that Blue Eagle has an indigenous bighorn sheep herd which most assuredly deserves wilderness protection. The antelope which are found in most of the recommended Wilderneeses would likewise benefit from a wilderness designation.

Thank you for the opportunity to present these comments.

Sincerely,

Clifton R. Merritt
Executive Director

Response Letter 41

41-1 The wilderness study process has reviewed not only the mineral resource data, which does not show strong evidence of mineral development, but also private inholdings, biome impacts, and other factors which effect the recommendation for wilderness in this WSA. All values are weighed in determining the suitability or nonsuitability for wilderness. In the case of the Kawich WSA, the wilderness values were not felt to be high enough to outweigh the other values that would be foregone.

Comment Letter 42

NEVADA RESOURCES INC.

July 8, 1982

Mr. Leslie A. Monroe
Tonopah Resource Area Manager
Building 102 Military Circle
P.O. Box 911
Tonopah, NV 89049

Re: Comments Preliminary Wilderness Recommendations
Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Mr. Monroe:

I have recently finished reading the Environmental Impact Statement on the Tonopah Resource Area Wilderness Recommendations. I represent part of the geological exploration sector of the public and have the following comments regarding the recommendations and methods of arriving at same.

I think you have given most of the potential users the benefit of the doubt in the preferred alternative. It appears to be a possible best-solution considering the alternatives.

I object, however, to the following practices, which have been considered, that "create" wilderness.

42-1 1. Closing the road between the Morey and Fandango WSA's creates a much larger "roadless" area. While this may create more potential for solitude, I don't think that building wilderness was the intent of the Wilderness Act of 1964 or the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. Further, rehabilitations of that same road will cost the public a fair amount, which again, goes against the intent of the Act and FLPMA.

2. Closing and rehabilitating "cherry-stem" roads, again, is "creating" wilderness area by removing evidence of mans' existence. The Wilderness Act of 1964 outlined the characteristics which a wilderness area must have, including "at least 5000 acres... of contiguous public land or be of a size to make practical its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition." and "generally appear to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable." I think that this is clear in the Legislature's intent that man's imprint is to be "substantially unnoticeable." Also, I don't get any sense of a desire, by the Legislature, that the public's precious dollars are to be spent by the Bureau of Land Management rehabilitating roads, or other areas, to create wilderness. It would appear that the intent was to set aside existing areas which fit the characteristics outlined in the Wilderness Act, not create new ones.

309

P O BOX 7095 • RENO, NV 89502
(702) 323-0737

Comment Letter 42

-2-

42-2 3. Purchasing adjacent lands and private inholdings is again "creating" wilderness by spending U.S. tax dollars to increase acreage. I can see where this could lead to more rehabilitation required and thus extra cost to "create" wilderness. No, this is not the intent of the Act. Those areas which must be modified to make them into wilderness must no longer be wilderness and can, therefore, not be considered under the present mandate from FLPMA.

The lands added to the Blue Eagle WSA are an example of this. I do not think that extra tax dollars should be spent to buy and rehabilitate lands thus creating wilderness. This particular example is also adjacent to known oil fields, and for that reason alone should not be considered due to its potential to help ease our nation's present energy crisis, and lend to the Nevada mineral economy.

Wilderness is a necessary and desired part of the United States as evidenced by the passage of the Wilderness Act of 1964 and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. I do not think, however, that the intention of the Legislature was to build and create wilderness by buying additional lands, reclaiming roads, removing imprints of man's existence via rehabilitation of roads, or withdrawing lands that may have a potentially important role in the mineral economy of the United States. I do think the intent was to set aside areas which are already in the public domain and which still possess the wilderness characteristics outlined in the 1964 Act without further expense to the public via modification to remove evidence of man's prior presence.

Sincerely concerned,

MICHAEL S. SMITH
Exploration Engineer

for JAMES H. BRIGHT
President

42-1 Please refer to response #35-2 to Gandrew.

Rehabilitation of cherrystem roads would be developed during the wilderness management plan which comes after designation of a wilderness area. These plans are specific to a given WSA and outline specific objectives for implementing the Wilderness Management Policy in the WSA.

42-2 Likewise, the law does not preclude the purchase of private inholdings where the reason for purchase or exchange is to preserve the wilderness values of the land around the private inholdings. The purpose of this action is to protect the wilderness values of land in the vicinity of the private lands, not as you suggest to "create" wilderness. It is proposed to exchange for lands in this WSA.

Comment Letter 43

FREEPORT

FREEPORT EXPLORATION COMPANY
A Division of Freeport Minerals Company

Valley Bank Plaza
South Virginia & Lonely
P.O. Box 1911
Reno, Nevada 89505
Phone (702) 322-2261
Telex 910-395-7068

June 14, 1982

Mr. Leslie A. Munroe
Tonopah Resource Area Manager
P.O. Box 911
Tonopah, NV 89049

Dear Mr. Munroe:

Thank you for allowing me to comment on the BLM alternatives to the Tonopah Wilderness EIS. The recommended "Preferred Alternative" I feel is unacceptable because it includes the Morey area. This area is unsuitable for withdrawal because of the following reasons:

1. The area is within the ring fracture system of the Warm Spring caldera; such structual settings are favorable for mineralization.
2. There are numerous prospect pits and drill sites in the area.
3. Part of the area has recently been staked.
4. There are significant metal anomalies within the area indicative of buried mineralization.

I feel that the BLM should adopt the "Emphasis on Resource Development Alternative" which will allow vehicle access to the Morey area. This alternative allows for withdrawal of the Lunar Crater area which has no mineral potential and is suitable for wilderness.

I must emphasize that the final plan should not include withdrawal of the Kawich Range or the Rawhide Mountain region. The Kawich Range is rimmed with mining districts. The central part of the range may have only thin post-mineralization cover. Thus, the potential for buried mineralization is good and the whole range should be excluded from wilderness consideration. The Rawhide Mountain area contains unassessed uranium potential and there has been recent claim staking; it should not be withdrawn.

Comment Letter 43

June 14, 1982
Page 2

In conclusion, the only BLM plan that allows these areas of mineral interest to remain open is the "Emphasis on Resource Development Alternative"; I feel this is the most suitable alternative.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on this important EIS.

Sincerely,

Kenneth P. Puchlik
Exploration Geologist

KPP/lma

cc: J.R. Arant
K.K. Kindig
P. Colby

FREEPORT

FREEPORT EXPLORATION COMPANY
A Division of Freeport Minerals Company

Valley Bank Plaza
South Virginia & Liberty
P.O. Box 1911
Reno, Nevada 89505
Phone: (702) 323-2311
Telex: 910 395-7208

June 25, 1982

U. S. Department of Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Battle Mountain District, Nevada

Re: Draft EIS - Tonopah Preliminary Wilderness Recommendations

This statement is an industry response to the public hearings on the Tonopah Preliminary Wilderness Recommendations and represent the factual data and comments as determined by myself as a mineral exploration geologists, and by Freeport Exploration Company. This statement is in specific regard to the "Kawich" portion (NV-060-019) of mine areas under consideration for wilderness status. The only acceptable alternative for the Kawich area is "Emphasis on Resource Development". The entire Kawich area is unsuitable for any restrictions on multiple use, and specifically mineral entry. My reasoning is as follows.

Mineral districts are located on the flanks of and on all side of the Kawich Range. Predominantly precious metals districts with past production, they are the Bellehelen District on the north, Eden on the east, Silver Bow on the south, and the Golden Arrow District on the west. The Bellehelen and Silver Bow Districts proper occur only one mile outside of the proposed wilderness study area boundary, and mineral prospects peripheral to the Silver Bow District occur within the WSA boundary in Section 20, T1N, R49E.

To date, geologic mapping and sampling has not been adequate to permit a complete evaluation of the mineral potential for the Kawich area. The published geologic mapping available is at a scale of 1:250,000 and is inadequate. The central part of the Kawich range, although postulated to be within a resurgent caldera, may represent outflow facies volcanic rocks that are merely a capping over extensions of the known mining districts. Should the resurgent cauldron exist, the intrusive bodies within the central and southwest portions of the WSA are excellent exploration targets for unexposed mineral deposits. In either case, the entire Kawich area has a high potential for the discovery of mineral deposits. Obviously, restrictions on mineral entry will abbreviate this potential.

U.S. Department of Interior
June 25, 1982
Page 2

In addition, based upon criteria developed by Fugro National, Inc., the following types of potential mineral resource areas exist within the Kawich WSA:

1) peripheral areas of indentified districts.
2) areas outside of identified districts at intersections of favorable geologic structures.

Using just these two criteria, the mineral potential classification for the entire Kawich area should be "Good". A much larger area than that shown on the EIS maps at the outer edges of the proposed boundary should be classified as "High" mineral potential. The areas of high potential reflect an overlap of the WSA boundary with a several mile radius area of influence around the known districts.

44-1 A reasonable dispute exists regarding the weighting of parameters used by Fugro to classify mineral potential for areas of non-Carlin type precious metals and base metals, of which the districts in the Kawich Range are included. Specifically, I disagree with the low number weighting given to mining districts of less than $1 million past production and to metal occurrences not included in a mining district (p. 12, Tonopah Minerals Technical Report). From an exploration point of view, any mineral occurrence no matter how insignificant in terms of past production should receive the highest weighting. As an excellent example, Freeport's Bell Mine at Jerritt Canyon was discovered in an area of no previous gold production, only limited prospects on antimony occurrences, and at a distance of greater than fifteen miles from the nearest mining district within the range. A similar situation of only very limited production prior to discovery applys to the Carlin gold mine. The weights given to mineral occurrences and past production, as stated in the Mineral Technical Report, do not apply to these two Carlin-type deposits; rather, other criteria are used. The problem is that at the time of discovery of the Carlin deposit, the criteria currently used for its recognition were not known. In other types of mineral deposits, exploration criteria are not necessarily well defined. An explorationist must therefore give a great deal of weight to mineral occurrences and mining districts, regardless of how insignificant they may appear.

Respectfully submitted,

Allan V. Moran
Senior Geologist
Freeport Exploration Co.

Response Letter 44

44-1 Please refer to response #32-1 to Rose Strickland.

SIERRA CLUB

Toiyabe Chapter Nevada and Eastern California

PLEASE REPLY TO:
☐ GREAT BASIN GROUP P.O. Box 8104 University Station Reno, Nevada 89507
☐ LAS VEGAS GROUP P.O. Box 18777 Las Vegas, Nevada 89115

July 9, 1982

Mr. Leslie A. Monroe, Tonopah Resource Area Manager
Building 142 Military Circle
P.O. Box 911
Tonopah, Nevada 89049

Dear Les:

This letter on the Tonopah Preliminary Wilderness Recommendations is an addition to our statement presented at the June 7th public hearing in Reno.

Kawich. The Toiyabe Chapter believes, after on-the-ground wilderness studies and inspection of BLM files, that a portion of the Kawich (NV-060-019) Wilderness Study Area should be recommended suitable for wilderness designation in the BLM's Preferred Alternative, as we stated at the hearing.

Enclosed is a topographic map showing our suggested boundary for this wilderness proposal. This boundary has been drawn using the methods in "Guidelines for the Location and Display of Wilderness Boundaries" included in the May 24, 1982 Information Memorandum No. NV-82-74 from State Director, Nevada to District Managers, Nevada.

We believe a Kawich wilderness proposal as outlined meets the Criteria to Evaluate Alternatives and to Select the Preferred Alternative listed on page 1-4 of the Draft EIS. This proposal possesses very high wilderness values including the spectacular scenery of extensively forested mountains, deep rugged canyons, an open rolling central plateau where oneafeels "on top of the world", strange rock outcrops, and two high lakes which are quite rare in Nevada mountains--especially those managed by BLM. Primitive recreation opportunities, from challenging climbs up steep forested canyons or slopes to gentle strolls on the high plateau, are outstanding.

There are multiple resource benefits from this wilderness designation including the extension of cultural resource protection to more acreage than the draft Preferred Alternative, the protection of additional watersheds including one of 6 high erosion potential watersheds not in the draft Preferred Alternative, and additional wildlife habitat protection including a large number of riparian communities. Vegetation manipulation projects for mule deer on the southeastern and southwestern portions of the WSA are outside the area we suggest as suitable.

To explore, enjoy, and protect the natural resources near ...

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Page Two.
Mr. Leslie A. Monroe
July 9, 1982

The suggested boundary encloses an area that clearly meets the manageability criterion. This proposal consists of a mountainous core,all of which is considered manageable in the Manageability Alternative. Steep slopes and heavy forest cover combine to naturally form a manageable wilderness unit.

Wilderness designation at Kawich would add diversity to the National Wilderness Preservation System. The area is in reality quite different from Morey-Pancakage and Blue Eagle, in spite of the fact that they are all described as pinyon-juniper ecosystems.

The identified areas of "good potential" for oil and gas, as well as some of the "high" and some of the "good potential" for base ferrous and precious metals are outside our suggested wilderness proposal. While some acreage that is rated in the Page/Ertec report as having "good" mineral potential is included, it must be remembered that this classification does not denote known ore or mineralization, but only "several geologic characteristics indicative of mineralization" and "similar environments at greater distances from known ore and mineral occurrences".

45-1 The BLM wilderness study process is biased against areas such as Kawich to the extent that decisions to recommend them non-suitable are based on presumed conflicts with mineral resource development. Even though the mineral resource data may be "the best information currently assembled and available", it is nevertheless still quite speculative. Kawich may in fact contain no minable ore deposits. The very rugged terrain in the mountains core could render small ore deposits uneconomical for development. Yet a non-suitable recommendation at this stage of the wilderness review process will prevent the area from having a USGS/Bureau of Mines mineral survey which would shed additional light on the actual conflict between known wilderness values and potential mineral development.

In summary, the Toiyabe Chapter believes our suggested boundary includes virtually all the high wilderness values at Kawich, provides a very manageable wilderness, and eliminates the majority of the conflicts with non-wilderness land uses. The area has strong public support and is worthy of further wilderness consideration.

South Reveille. Enclosed is a second map which shows a suggested boundary that would add the Reveille Valley portion of the South Reveille WSA to the wilderness proposal in the draft Preferred Alternative.

This boundary follows that in the Preferred Alternative along the eastern side, and thus also eliminates any conflicts with oil and gas and base ferrous and precious metal mineral potential on the Railroad Valley portions of the WSA.

On the north this boundary is drawn, as shown on the map, northwest up the drainage on the east side of the high part of the

Comment Letter 45

Page [illegible]
Mr. Leslie M. Manes
July 9, 1982

Range and then along the ridge south of New Reveille Mine to the North boundary road. Thus on the north end of the WSA most of the area classified as "good base ferrous and precious metal mineral potential" is excluded while several square miles of very rugged, forested country on the crest of the range is included in the wilderness proposal.

This suggested boundary then follows the WSA boundary roads in Reveille Valley to the southern tip of the unit where it proceeds north along the eastern side of the hills until it rejoins the draft Preferred Alternative boundary.

This suggested boundary would more than double the South Reveille wilderness proposal, thus enhancing the outstanding opportunities for solitude originally documented in the wilderness inventory. It would realize a virtually unique opportunity to include the sweep of a Nevada valley and mountain range in a single wilderness. This would also add diversity to the National Wilderness System, especially since little similar terrain is being considered for wilderness preservation. The area has strong public support and should be recommended suitable.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on these excellent wilderness proposals in the Tonopah Resource Area.

Sincerely,

Roger Scholl

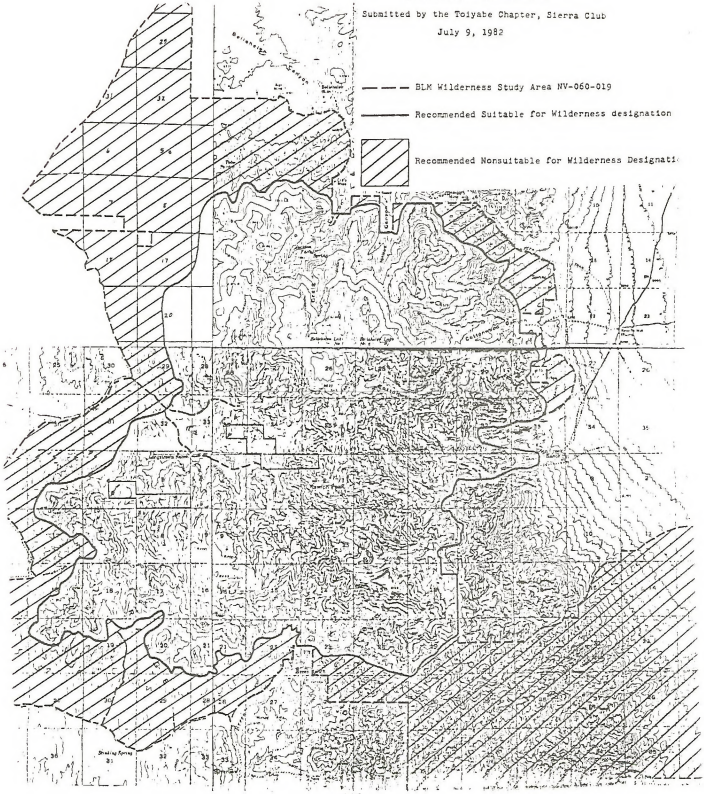
Roger Scholl
Wilderness Committee Chairman

Response Letter 45

45-1 The wilderness study process was designed to review and evaluate all resource values within each WSA, known and potential. Although conflicts were eliminated where possible to leave viable areas of high wilderness values, some areas were determined to no longer be suitable and were not recommended for wilderness designation in the EIS. However, the final decision will be made by Congress and they will evaluate all of the alternatives presented prior to making a decision. They will also have the benefit of further minerals data after the Bureau of Mines reports are received.

Submitted by the Toiyabe Chapter, Sierra Club

July 9, 1982



SOUTH REVEILLE PROPOSED WILDERNESS
Submitted by the Toiyabe Chapter, Sierra Club
July 9, 1982
BLM Wilderness Study Area NV-060-112
Recommended Suitable for Wilderness Designation
Recommended Nonsuitable for Wilderness Designation

Comment Letter 46

Cotter

E. Fred Birdsall
Director Administration and Personnel

Cotter Inc
555 17th Street
Denver, CO 80202
(303) 575-5123

June 15, 1984

Mr. Lashlee Malone
BLM Tonopah Resource Area Manager
P. O. Box 911
Tonopah, Nevada

Dear Mr. Malone:

I regret not having been able to attend your earlier Tonopah RMP hearings.

My principal concern with WSA evaluations in general has been a frequent lack of adequate subsurface mineral assessment, thus contributing to an uninformed decision on tradeoff values. I, therefore, urge that you pay particular attention in your Tonopah decisions that mineral presence or absence is sufficiently documented before making land use decisions which might foreclose exploration and development for yet-to-be-discovered subsurface minerals.

My second concern with WSA evaluations is that wilderness suitability decisions are sometimes made to protect fragile resources in areas which may not totally qualify for wilderness designation. There being a great sufficiency of other devices to insure protection it is unnecessary to resort to wilderness designation in areas with less than perfect wilderness values.

Yours very truly,

E. Fred Birdsall

E. Fred Birdsall

jjl

Comment Letter 47

Rose Strickland 1665 KINGS ROW RENO, NV 89503

Lis Renrow, Manager
BLM/Tonopah Resource Area
P. O. Box 511
Tonopah, NV 89049

Dear Area Manager Renrow,

I would like to add my support to the preferred alternative of the Tonopah Preliminary Wilderness Recommendations EIS, which appears to be a reasonable balance between no wilderness and all wilderness. The major oversight of this alternative is the deletion of Kawich which should be recommended as wilderness in the final EIS. Any management problems with the area can be worked out with appropriate boundary adjustments. I support the boundaries for Kawich and all other wilderness areas as drawn by the Sierra Club.

The EIS more than adequately illustrates the benefits of wilderness designation are far greater than the benefits forgone by wilderness designation of the six WSAs.

47-1 The final EIS should also reflect the fact that the Six-Mile Canyon road is already closed as part of an approved Habitat Management Plan, not due to wilderness designation.

Thank you for your consideration of ay comments.

Sincerely,

Rose Strickland

Response Letter 47

47-1 Please refer to response # 32-5 of your letter dated June 7, 1982.

Comment Letter 48.

Atlantic Richfield Company
Denver, Colorado 80217
Telephone 303 575 7577

J. R. Mitchell
Public Lands Coordinator

July 9, 1982

Mr. Leslie A. Monroe
Tonopah Resource Area Manager
Box 911
Tonopah, Nevada 89049

Re: Tonopah Resource Area
Draft Wilderness Recommendations

Dear Mr. Monroe:

Atlantic Richfield Company appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the Bureau of Land Management's Draft Wilderness Recommendations for the Tonopah Resource Area in Nevada. We believe the recommendations do not adequately reflect the value of mineral potential within the Wilderness Study Areas. Additionally, the closing of a road between two WSA's to create wilderness is not in compliance with the standards and criteria set forth in the Wilderness Act of 1964 and is, therefore, illegal. 48-1

We believe the mineral data used to eliminate areas from wilderness consideration is totally inadequate. It is evident from your decisions that an area that have experienced past production for its potential to be considered high enough to preclude wilderness designation. There was little attempt by the Tonopah Resource Area to gather additional information regarding the potential for energy and minerals within these areas. A proposal was published in the Federal Register in December 1981 to provide a means by which the BLM could solicit additional energy and mineral information which could assist in making these decisions. This proposal (attached) was completely ignored. 48-2 48-3

Atlantic Richfield recommends that the alternative providing emphasis on resource development be adopted by the BLM for the Tonopah Resource Area.

We believe these comments should be given serious consideration in reaching your final decisions.

Sincerely,

J. R. Mitchell

JRM:drs
Attachment

Response Letter 48.

48-1 Please refer to response # 35-2 for Canonas.

48-2 The mineral data used to determine the recommendation of each WSA was the best data available. Additional information of WSAs recommended for wilderness designation is presently being gathered by the Bureau of Mines and the U.S. Geological Survey. This report will be evaluated and if additional information warrants a change in recommendation, a supplement will be issued.

48-3 The Federal Register notice on "Energy and Mineral Resource Data Gathering in Wilderness Study Areas" states, "It is emphasized that this notice does not constitute a proposal to adopt either this system or one similar. Following analysis and evaluation of all the comments received, a decision will be made to either stop or to continue the development of a rating system. If further development results in a proposal it would be published in the Federal Register for appropriate review prior to adoption". The proposal had not been adopted at the time the Tonopah Wilderness Study was completed. However, mining companies have been encouraged throughout the study to provide information on the mineral potential of the areas.

Comment Letter 48

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

Energy and Mineral Resource Data Gathering on Wilderness Study Areas

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Request for public comment on a possible method of testing the feasibility of the energy and mineral resources of the [illegible] which seem to contain [illegible] energy resources.

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Land Management [illegible] has been requested by [illegible] to test the wilderness study areas [illegible] with members of the mineral industry a method [illegible] the energy and mineral resources of the areas. [illegible] the feasibility of the energy and mineral resources [illegible] with which to test the energy and mineral resources [illegible] the wilderness review.

Each wilderness study area will be studied through the Bureau of Land Management's resource management planning process where the merits of the area as a potential wilderness will be considered together with other resource management alternatives. When the study process has been completed, each wilderness area must be reported as either suitable or unsuitable for designation as a wilderness through the Secretary of the Interior and the President to Congress.

The energy and mineral resource assessment of wilderness study areas will be performed by the Bureau of Land Management as part of the study/planning process. In addition, a mineral survey will be conducted by the Geological Survey and Bureau of Mines for any area recommended as suitable.

Rating System

As a basic part of the energy and mineral resource assessment program, the Bureau is considering the use of a rating system. One possible system would provide an estimate of the geologic favorability of a wilderness study area to contain energy and mineral resources. This favorability would be described as "High", "Medium", "High", "Very High", or "Unknown". The rating system would serve as an alternative method of eliciting public comment on the energy and mineral resources of individual wilderness study areas. Although there are several methods of eliciting public opinion information for the Bureau of Land Management's mineral resource assessment, the public has often failed to respond for a variety of reasons. Uncertainly, about the type of information needed by the Bureau of Land Management is one of the reasons cited. The form described below represents an opportunity for the industry and the public to provide specific energy and mineral resource information for individual decision-making. Contemporarily, it is important that the rationale for the rating be as explicit, detailed, and quantifiable as possible.

The use of the rating form would, of course, be optional. The Bureau would continue to rely on the public and on its staff experts as primary sources for energy and mineral resources of areas under study.

Format

The individual ratings would be recorded on this form:

Bureau of Land Management, Energy and Mineral Resources Assessment Form

State	County
BLM District	Planning Unit
Wilderness Study Area Name	Wilderness Study Area Number
Date	

Resource	Rating	Remarks
Oil and Gas		
Geothermal		
Coal		
Uranium		
Other Metals		
Industrial Minerals		

Comments by or Submitted: _____
Rating Form Completed by: _____
Reviewed by: _____
Recorded: _____
(Name of contact, phone to contact mailing address and phone No.)

Completing the Form

A set of instructions along with a map or maps of an individual wilderness study area will accompany each form. The instructions are as follows:

A. Complete the form for each wilderness study area or subdivision thereof for which you have energy and mineral resource information.

B. Rate each resource of the resource in energy or minerals found on the form. Based on the basis favorability to contain that resource. "Favorability" is defined as the potential of a particular geologic environment to contain mineral and energy resources. Favorability does not consider the feasibility of extraction, the recoverability to the land, or other factors. It is a measure of geologic details important to the resource. Favorability is a rating of the resource based on: (1) adverse, to (2) permissive, to (3) suggestive, to (4) highly suggestive nature of the geologic features which present within and adjacent to an area.

This information would be used by the Bureau of Land Management in evaluating the energy and mineral resource potential of a wilderness study area. The overall question would be one factor used by the Bureau of Land Management by [illegible] the relative [illegible] availability or unavailability.

The public is invited to comment on the system generally, its usefulness and its anticipated modifications as appropriate. If this system is implemented and is well received by the public, the Bureau of Land Management would consider extending the usage of the system to other areas subsequent to the Bureau of Land Management.

It is emphasized that this notice does not commence a proposal to adopt either this system or any other. Following analysis and evaluation of all the comments received, a decision will be made either to stop or to continue the development of a rating system. If further development results in a proposal it would be published in the Federal Register for appropriate review prior to adoption.

DATE: Written comments will be accepted on or before February 8, 1982.

ADDRESS: Comments should be addressed to Director (630), Bureau of Land Management, 1849 C Street, NW., Washington, D.C. 20240.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jerry Cole, Bureau of Land Management, Minerals Management Service, Washington (202) 343-8735.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: As a result of the Bureau of Land Management's wilderness inventory, as of January 1, 1981, there are almost 25 million acres of public land under study as Wilderness Study Areas. Five Districts in the West have wilderness study areas have been determined to lack wilderness characteristics and were dropped from further consideration in the wilderness review.

Each wilderness study area will be studied through the Bureau of Land Management's resource management planning process where the merits of the area as a potential wilderness will be considered together with other resource management alternatives. When the study process has been completed, each wilderness study area must be reported as either suitable or unsuitable for designation as a wilderness through the Secretary of the Interior and the President to Congress.

The energy and mineral resource assessment of wilderness study areas will be performed by the Bureau of Land Management as part of the study/planning process. In addition, a mineral survey will be conducted by the Geological Survey and Bureau of Mines for any area recommended as suitable.

Rating System

As a basic part of the energy and mineral resource assessment program, the Bureau is considering the use of a rating system. One possible system would provide an estimate of the geologic favorability of a wilderness study area to contain energy and mineral resources. This favorability would be described as "High", "Medium", "High", "Very High", or "Unknown". The rating system would serve as an alternative method of eliciting public comment on the energy and mineral resources of individual wilderness study areas. Although there are several methods of eliciting public opinion information for the Bureau of Land Management's mineral resource assessment, the public has often failed to respond for a variety of reasons. Uncertainty about the type of information needed by the Bureau of Land Management is one of the reasons cited. The form described below represents an opportunity for the industry and the public to provide specific energy and mineral resource information for individual decision-making. Contemporarily, it is important that the rationale for the rating be as explicit, detailed, and quantifiable as possible.

The use of the rating form would, of course, be optional. The Bureau would continue to rely on the public and on its staff experts as primary sources for energy and mineral resources of areas under study.

Format

The individual ratings would be recorded on this form:

Bureau of Land Management, Energy and Mineral Resources Assessment Form

State	County
BLM District	Planning Unit
Wilderness Study Area Name	Wilderness Study Area Number
Date	

Resource	Rating	Remarks
Oil and Gas		
Geothermal		
Coal		
Uranium		
Other Metals		
Industrial Minerals		

Comments by or Submitted: _____
Rating Form Completed by: _____
Reviewed by: _____
Recorded: _____
(Name of contact, phone to contact mailing address and phone No.)

Completing the Form

A set of instructions along with a map or maps of an individual wilderness study area will accompany each form. The instructions are as follows:

A. Complete the form for each wilderness study area or subdivision thereof for which you have energy and mineral resource information.

B. Rate each of the resources in energy or minerals found on the form. Based on the basis favorability to contain that resource. "Favorability" is defined as the potential of a particular geologic environment to contain mineral and energy resources. Favorability does not consider the feasibility of extraction, the recoverability to the land, or other factors. It is a measure of geologic details important to the resource. Favorability is a rating of the resource based on: (1) adverse, to (2) permissive, to (3) suggestive, to (4) highly suggestive nature of the geologic features which present within and adjacent to an area.

Ratings

Low favorability = very few geologic characteristics favorable for the occurrence of a given resource are present.

Medium favorability = some geologic characteristics are present that are favorable for the occurrence of a given resource.

High favorability = a number of geologic characteristics are present that suggest the occurrence of a given resource.

Very high favorability = many geologic features are present (indicates the occurrence of a given resource.

Unknown favorability = the rating will be applied when there are few, but no which to make the evaluation and the true rating may be low, medium high, or very high.

C. If more information is available for specific locations in the area and you are willing to provide such information please do so.

D. Remarks—indicate any clarifying information about the rating assigned (e.g. "Adverse because of [illegible]").

E. Comments and Summary—include any narrative description in support of your ratings. The more backup information that is provided the more helpful these ratings will be to us in making fully informed decisions as to the suitability or unsuitability of a wilderness study area for wilderness.

F. Geologic Characteristics—include any geologic support data here (sign, structure, folds, etc.)

G. References—include—for any public the citations available for reference in support of the ratings.

H. Name Date—given the name and telephone number of the state or the person to contact for clarification or follow up (in the do is provide the name of a mailing address to ensure that you receive information on the progress of the planning process and opportunities for educational public involvement.

Dated: December 3, 1981.

Arnold E. Petty,

Acting Associate Director.

[FR Doc. 81-35481 Filed 12-9-81; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310-84-M

Comment Letter 49

Comment Letter 49

Ruth C. Douglas
4401 Wilshire Blvd. #410
Los Angeles, Calif. 90010

July 4 1982

Leslie A.Monroe,
Tonopah Resource Area Manager,
P.O.Box 911
Tonopah,Nevada 89049

Dear Mr Monroe:

This is to comment briefly on the BLM Wilderness Recommendations for the WSA's in the Tonopah Resource Area of the Battle Mountain District.
First of all may I say that I was very pleasantly surprised on my first reading of the Draft EIS. Quite frankly -in view of the present violently anti-wilderness attitude of the Reagan Administration,officerstary Watt and of the present Director of the Bureau of Land Management,I had never expected this amount of wildlands to be recommended for wilderness designation.
I think that you and your staff are to be highly commended for your courage and fortitude in acting as you have as regards wilderness.

Of course I would like to see more wilderness designated-obviously many portions of WSA's and entire blocks of potential wilderness have been dropped from the EIS and some of those that deserved better were dropped from preliminary study -such as,for instance,the Diamond Mountains which deserve a better fate than to be destroyed by miners and presumably DAVS when the miners have finished with them... I am a fan of those poor Diamonds I BET -in the present context when it sometimes seems that even existing officially designated wilderness,long ago set aside as such, is so lamely safe and may be sacrificed,your draft looks good indeed. I am particularly happy to see that a suggestion that I myself made to you- or perhaps it was to your predecessor in the office- namely that Morey Peak and Fandango are going to be considered as one wilderness and Six Mile Canyon closed to ALL motorized traffic by the blocking off of the existing jeep road-has become reality and that you are adopting this position officially. No doubt others also pressed you to do this. Morey Peak plus Fandango would form one magnificent wilderness - a truly great example of Great Basin ecological values and treasures, with the sense of solitude and the silence that is the special appeal of truly big wilderness areas. Thank you very specially for this one. Pollasde Mesa and the Wall as well as South Reveille and Blue Eagle Mountain will all form beautiful areas of Nevada wilderness if they can pass the final test of various opposing interests and can be sheltered under the Wilderness Protection Act.
I'll admit to a lot of disappointment though at NOT seeing the Kawich Range WSA In your list of recommended wilderness. The Kawich seems to me to have fully qualified under your own set of wilderness criteria-standards as any of the areas you have recommended. Indeed ,are a rarity in the Great Basin and should be preserved whenever possible -Kawich has two small lakes on a high central plateau -it also has streams -not too common in Nevada lands-and these streams are undisturbed and have their normal wildlife and wild plant systems almost intact -only wilderness designation will give them some protection and prevent their eventual destruction by various forms of "development",including authorized poaching.
Although stands of pinyon pine,juniper and mountain mahogany are not rare in Nevada yet these lands prefer more dense than in wheel and should therefore be given the safeguard of further existence that only their classification into wilderness can ensure.
PLEASE ho reconsider your exclusion of Kawich from recommendation for wilderness protection.If you consider all of the facts I feel certain that you will change your mind and place Kawich where it rightly belongs: in wilderness.

322

Sadly enough I was unable to attend the public meetings on the Draft EIS for Tonopah Resource area wilderness. This letter is the only way I have at present to both express my appreciation and gratitude for what you have done and to beg you to do a little more-include Kawich in the EIS.
I hope that you will have received much considered support for wilderness. Knowing Nevada,and even more so,its present climate of wilderness and wildlife hostility,I need not add that I am fully aware of all the opposition you will encounter from many sides on your generous and carefully considered designations for wilderness protection.
Please keep up the fight for what you have already accomplished so that it may become reality at last.

I wish I could be of more assistance. Please keep me posted on all further action for wilderness .

With my deeply felt thanks and fervent hopes that you may succeed in preserving what you are trying to preserve

Very sincerely yours

Ruth Douglas

Ruth C.Douglas

P.S. Please give my very best wishes and remembrances to Dorothy Mason and Don Joseph if they are still with BLM Tonopah.Tell them that I hope to see them again one day if I can manage to return to Tonopah and further explore the magnificent country that is yours to care for and protect. I think that Don and is in Idaho but if by any chance she is in your office then remember me to her also.

Thank you

R.

Comment Letter 50

June 5 1986

Mr Tom Magee

I see the Wilderness withdrawal is kind of hard pill to me. It appears funny of all that these areas shown within the studies Bill are all prime minerals areas which will be or are being closed off.

A few yrs ago the Intentional commission tried to grab all our grazing lands as well as all the rivers which the minerals depends through the W.C. system and fail

This wilderness with shown appears to be the same trick with a new name and face.

The Intentional commission right now is the World Dictator. They control Energy, Money, Politics. They are illegally taking over our public land without our consent.

You will notice many of the administration's laws and policies are in direct conflict with United States Constitutional rights.

And we ask Ed M to take our money against our wishes and force off and close all our land? The

answer is emphatically NO!

The environmentalists crowd that we electing them scream yet when they back peak they throw their garbage all over the place.

You will notice that all these studies have all been done by Big mining companies which are indirectly or directly owned by the Intentional commission and it appears as though they will be enabled to put a freeze on any future prospecting or development & minerals until at a later date the Big companies will be allowed to go in mine these wilderness areas when they see the price of minerals and stocks which they also control and manipulate.

The the People of the United States are getting screwed with these rules which benefit only the greed of the Intentional commission and violate the principles of our Constitutional Rights as we are Look principles of Freedom of Choice

Comment Letter 50

3

You make my words use the
citizens will not be allowed into
these areas but in a few years the
Big Mining Companies which are owned
by the International commission will
be operating these areas.

Two hundred years ago plus
the people wrote a declaration of
indepence against these same such
principles of government regulations
without the people some being
hard. The Department of Interior
is walking on a ~~sleeping~~ sleeping
giant, how much longer do the people
may can continue U.S. Constitutional
rights with their delinquentative
duties and get away with it.

The Predicament of Interior as
well as all Washington are our
public servants not our dictators
and it's high time they start paying
to All the people, not just those
with money.

God Bless America
David Scott Simpson
Armed Deputy
Round Mountain Nev 89045

Comment Letter 51

[illegible]

July 7, 1992

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Comment Letter 52

NAPPE

July 9, 1982

Mr. Leslie A. Monroe
Tonopah Resource Area Manager
Building 902 Military Circle
Tonopah, Nevada 89049

Dear Mr. Monroe:

Subject: Draft Tonopah Wilderness Environmental Impact Statement

I am truly pleased and surprised by your recommendations for wilderness in the Tonopah Resource Area. You have recognized the role wilderness plays in protecting high quality lands from road building and thus assuring a future for high aesthetic value lands and wildlife resources. I hope you will reconsider your rejection of the Kawich Range in light of the need to protect these unique resources.

Because of the inadequate controls by federal, state, and local agencies governing road and trail construction, the only protection Nevada's lands currently have is through wilderness designation. Because of Nevadan's aversion to road closure or restriction on options to build new roads, "manageability" may initially be difficult on all WSA's. Yet roads scar the land, may cause watershed problems and open up areas to poaching and vandalism. Wilderness protection will be an education process but in years to come will be appreciated by Nevadans, most of whom truly care about the open lands. In light of the need to protect riparian areas, I am especially pleased by your closure of Stanislo Canyon Road.

52-1 CRMP groups should be created within the near future to develop management plans for WSA's to assess the longterm management needs for livestock and wildlife. While planning created wheatgrass seedings would not be appropriate for a WSA, removal of pinyon pine might not impinge on wilderness characteristics if the original habitat was more open. Furthermore, if additional improvements are needed to protect the range, such improvements would be preferable to poor range conditions.

Most Sincerely,

Tina Nappe

3340 BERTHOUD • RENO, NEVADA 89503

Response Letter 52

52-1 Management of wilderness study areas (WSAs) is guided by the Interim Management Policy and Guidelines of Lands Under Wilderness Review. Management plans will only be prepared for areas designated by Congress as wilderness.

Comment Letter 53

960 West 12th Street
Reno, Nevada 89503
July 7, 1982

Mr. Leslie Monroe, Manager
Tonopah Resource Area, BLM
P. O. Box 911
Tonopah, Nevada 89049

Dear Mr. Monroe:

I wish to express my support of the wilderness recommendations contained in the Draft EIS for the Tonopah Resource Area. The selection of certain wilderness areas in Nevada will insure that some land will be left undeveloped for our children and grandchildren to enjoy.

Sincerely,

Jean Diamond

Comment Letter 54

720 Brookfield Drive
Reno, Nevada 89503
July 7, 1982

Mr. Les Monroe, Manager
Tonopah Resource Area, BLM
P. O. Box 911
Tonopah, Nevada 89049

Dear Mr. Monroe:

I am writing this letter as an individual and not as a representative of any organization.

Since I came to Nevada 23 years ago, I have been fascinated with the possibility of obtaining wilderness classification for some of our wild, remote public land areas. Consequently, I was gratified when the BLM Organic Act was passed in 1976, which required study of the roadless areas for possible inclusion in the Wilderness System. I have participated actively in the inventory process and in the WSA selection.

Because the Tonopah wilderness recommendations are the first to be made in the state, they are particularly important. You have selected six areas that have outstanding wilderness values, and, at the same time, have, in most cases, done an excellent job of resolving resource conflicts, particularly with mining. The boundaries drawn are both manageable and avoid heavily mineralized portions of each area, according to the best information.

Marty Peak is the only wilderness in the Tonopah Area where I have had the pleasure of hiking (this is a situation I hope to remedy in the near future), and it has long been a favorite of mine. I very much favor the closure of the Silk-Mile Canyon road because of the resource damage that is occurring there. Trout streams are too rare in this dry region of the state to be cross-crossed by an unnecessary road that causes stream erosion.

From the pictures I have seen which were taken in the Kawich Range and from the text in the WSA recommendations, I do not understand why at least a portion of this beautiful and rugged area was not recommended for wilderness status. I hope this omission can be rectified in the Final EIS.

Thank you for the outstanding work you have done on these recommendations. Please send me a copy of the Final EIS when it is available.

Sincerely,

Marjorie Hill

Comment Letter 55

941 Grandview
Reno, Nevada 89501
July 7, 1982

Mr. Leslie Monroe, Area Manager
Tonopah Resource Area
P. O. Box 911
Tonopah, NV 89049

Dear Mr. Monroe:

I support the preliminary wilderness recommendations as outlined in the draft EIS for the Tonopah Resource Area. The six areas recommended will make an important addition to the national Wilderness System and are indeed worthy of this protection.

Sincerely yours,

Betty Nolee

Betty Nolee

Comment Letter 56

7/7/82

Mr. Leslie A. Monroe
Tonopah Resource Area Manager
P.O. Box 911
Tonopah, NV 89049

Dear Mr. Monroe,

I am writing in support of the Bureau of Land Management's wilderness recommendations for Nevada. The areas recommended on the Pahranagat and Clubbed Jim Valley and the Jackrabbit Range. Although I have only seen the first area comprising the first three, any one of the recommended wilderness areas would be a great addition to our wilderness system. I have always been an advocate of conserving and preserving U.S. public land and hope that we are lucky enough to have our this great country. Once the great areas have been lost, it can never be recovered. I will not be able to be future generations only as photos and paintings.

Sincerely,

Duane E. Mason
3141 Bonita Beach Dr.
Sparks, NV 89431

PS I have been a member of the California coast for all of my life, especially is made a sign when I moved to Nevada. Nevada's beauty, as beautiful and environment and need - protection for those of us in

Comment Letter 56

the present and for all future generations.

EIVED
S MANAGEMENT
1982
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Routing List BMDO

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Remarks:

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
MID-PACIFIC REGIONAL OFFICE
2800 COTTAGE WAY
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95825-1898

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
1986 OCT 34 AM 11:19
BATTLE MOUNTAIN DISTRICT

IN REPLY REFER TO: MP-750
120.1

OCT 29 1986

Mr. Terry L. Plummer, District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
P.O. Box 1420
Battle Mountain, NV 89820

Dear Mr. Plummer:

This is in response to your request for comments on the Draft Tonopah Preliminary Wilderness Recommendations Environmental Impact Statement.

The proposal will not affect existing or proposed Bureau of Reclamation facilities or operations.

Thank you for the opportunity to review the document.

Sincerely,

F. Phillip Sharpe

F. PHILLIP SHARPE, CHIEF
DIVISION OF PLANNING & TECHNICAL SERVICES

TONOPAH, NEVADA PUBLIC HEARING TESTIMONY

57. Merl Richard, Nevada Miners and Prospectors Association, Treasurer; Nevada Prospector Magazine, Publisher

1 "...we were told that these wilderness study areas that when we put in input into these, that one petition would count as one vote."..."So my question was in the meeting today, is this going to be run the same way that it was when it was originally started?"

RENO, NEVADA PUBLIC HEARING TESTIMONY

58. Ross Smith

2 "For example, if one takes a look at the geology of the area, one finds that the rock near the high plateau where the -- near the northern end of the area where the Bellehelen Lakes are located is different in nature than that of much of the surrounding country."

"That is where the various mining districts have been located in the past."

These mining districts are generally found -- well, they are found in all cases in various tufts, probably hydrothermically altered. The high country around the Bellehelen Lakes is a quartz latite. It's an intrusive body, probably a plug of some kind, and in my opinion not a good bet for precious mineralization."

"Thus in the FUGRO and also in the map that's published in the draft EIS, this is not differentiated from the rest of this area and no note is made of this different rock type near the crest of the range."

59. Warren Richardson, Nevada Miners and Propsectors, President

3 "Now, to get to the mineral aspects, I notice in your preferred alternatives, the selection of preferred alternatives will give a thorough consideration to any identified or potential mineral resources."

"Now, it seems to me that guideline has not been followed by this Morey Fandango area."

60. Curtis Spaulding

4 "Perhaps the EIS should point out the economic values of wilderness which are often overlooked. Gas, restaurant, groceries, outfitters and other providers of services to backpackers and other wilderness users."

61. Mike Del Grosso, Nevada Division of State Lands

5 "There is a section in there that talks about some private land involved. We would suggest that all land acquisitions proposed should be by change wherever possible and not through outright purchase by the federal government."

6 "I also object to the implication that if an area is not designated as wilderness, then the area is going to be destroyed. This is not true, there are no bulldozers waiting in the wings to destroy an area that is not immediately designated wilderness."

62. Bob Warren, Nevada Mining Association, Executive Secretary

"Some justify the lock-up, and I have used that word with this lady's permission, if she's still here, that mining will forever destroy the wilderness values if the lands remain open."

"This is an absurd conclusion, in fact on page 33 of the EIS this statement is made by the BLM wilderness evaluators:"

7 "All nine wilderness study areas generally appear to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable."

"All of us here are aware, however, that several of these areas were former sights of exploration and mining of minerals, yet these sights are eagerly supported for wilderness by the preservationists despite the evidence of the earlier mining they know very well that the early day exploration and mining have not made the area unsuitable for wilderness, and this mining was conducted before the district present day requirements to mitigate adverse environmental impacts on the public lands."

8 "On page 1-1 the criteria are laid out. No mention is made of the fact that it must be roadless, which is the first prerequisite for any wilderness study area."

9 "Here now we go into the thicket, BLM is now admitting that despite the cherry stemming the roads do still exist in the wilderness study areas, so BLM now proposes to close them forever."

"They will be ripped out and reseeded or merely left to revert to wilderness."

63. Doug McGibbon

"My real concern, my real reason for being up here is to express my concern with some of the background materials that were used in the minerals technical report, specifically barite is the commodity I'm interested in, so I'm going to restrict myself to that."

10 But in four paragraphs there are just about that many mistakes of a major nature."

"First of all, a lot of people -- well, in the reports barite is called an epigenitic ore deposit. A lot of people in recent years have leaned away from that, and they think that they may have more of a synergenitic origin. That's really not nit-picking, although the nongeologists may not understand."

"Most of the barite, as it says in the report, occurs in a belt coinciding with the Antler orogenic belt."

"The next sentence mentions that the deposits are replacement types of hydrothermal origin occurring in carbonate rocks."

63. (cont.) "While that does occur, it's very minor, and I don't know of any major companies or many of the propsectors who hold much stock with that idea any more, so on the basis of mineral potential we're eliminating areas under a faulty assumption, and that's where my concern is, that this, regardless of which alternative is adopted, if this group of alternatives is to set a precedent, we're basing that precedent on faulty information as far as barite specifically, but I think there are other mineral related misassumptions and so forth."

"And another faulty bit of reasoning here concerns the Warm Springs mine specifically."

"It's a barite mine that's described as being located east of the interpreted east limit of the barite belt."

"Well, if we can draw a line on the map and say, 'That's the barite belt', then either the Warm Springs mine doesn't exist, which it certainly does, or it's a faulty bit of reasoning."

"The occurrence of significant barite deposits should define the belt and not the reverse."

Tonopah Public Hearing Response:

1. Merl Richard :

All letters and testimony were reviewed to determine if they met the required criteria for response, i.e., discussion of the adequacy of the draft environmental impact statement. Substantive comments which presented new data, questioned facts and/or analyses, or commented on issues bearing directly on the draft environmental impact statement of the environmental impacts of the alternatives were fully evaluated and given responses. Changes or additions to the draft have been incorporated into this final statement.

Reno Public Hearing Responses:

2. Ross Smith :

The text refers to the high central portion of the Kawich WSA as being an intrusive body. This intrusive body has an exposure of only a few square miles extent. The ore deposits of the mining districts around the Kawich WSA are indeed in the tuffs, but there is the likelihood that these deposits are spacially and genetically related to the intrusive body which may represent the final magmatic activity associated with the inferred caldera in that part of the Kawich Range.

3. Warren Richardson :

The Preferred Alternative of the draft environmental impact statement reduces the impact on the exploration for and development of potential mineral and energy resources by 75 percent. Mineral resources survey reports will also be prepared by the U.S. Geological Survey and the U.S. Bureau of Mines on all areas with a preliminary recommendation as suitable for wilderness designation. This additional minerals information will become part of the information used by the Secretary of the Interior in making final recommendations.

4. Carl Spaulding :

Because these values are difficult at best to quantify, it is not easily ascertained what economic impacts would occur. Where these could be quantified, they were considered in the impacts discussed in Chapter Four of the final EIS.

5. Mike Del Grosso :

The acquisition of private inholdings will occur only under certain circumstances; (1) the owner concurs in such acquisition, and (2) the acquisition is authorized by Congress. Adjacent lands proposed to be added to the Kawich WSA and Blue Eagle WSA are public lands administered by the BLM. These proposed additions are roadless and in an essentially natural condition.

Reno Public Hearing Responses:

6. Mike Del Grosso :

   The impacts which are discussed in Chapter Four on wilderness values are impacts based on logical development which may occur in the future. It does not mean immident, as in next week or even next month, but they are developments that could be expected to occur within the lifetime of this planning document.

7. Bob Warren :

   Potential impacts to the wilderness character of the areas are projections of impacts which may logically occur within the timeframe of this planning document, an possibly within the time it takes Congress to make final decisions on the wilderness area designations.

8. Guidance for conducting the wilderness inventory was contained in the BLM "Wilderness Inventory Handbook", issued in September, 1978. One of the criteria used to determine wilderness study areas was the term "roadless". All of the areas in the Tonopah Resource Area were determined to meet the wilderness criteria.

9. Please refer to response # 35-2 to Canorex International, Inc.

10. Doug McGibbon :

    The barite deposits in Nye County which occur outside of the "barite belt" are not particularly large and could probably not be considered significant. A mineral belt is intended to show a general pattern of distribution and/or concentration where one is distinguishable and consequently will not always include all occurrences of that particular mineral. As are many other points in geology, the genesis of some types of ore are still unagreed to and often widely varying opinions can be obtained by talking to different experts on a particular subject.

ACRONYMS

BLM - Bureau of Land Management

RARE II - The second U.S. Forest Service Roadless Area Review and Evaluation.

WSA - Wilderness Study Area

TERMS

ALLOTMENT - An area designated for the use of a prescribed number and class of livestock under one plan of management.

ALLOTMENT MANAGEMENT PLAN (AMP) - A documented program which applies to livestock operations on the public lands, which is prepared in consultation with the permittee(s) or lessee(s) involved, and which: (1) prescribes the manner in and extent to which livestock operations will be conducted in order to meet the multiple use, sustained yield, economic, and other needs and objectives as determined for the public lands through land use planning; (2) describes the type, location, ownership, and general specifications for the range improvements to be installed and maintained on the public lands to meet the livestock grazing and other objectives of land management: and (3) contains such other provisions relating to livestock grazing and other objectives as may be prescribed by the authorized officer consistent with applicable law.

ANIMAL UNIT MONTH (AUM) - The amount of feed or forage required to sustain a mature cow or the equivalent for one month.

ASH FLOW - A highly heated mixture of volcanic gases and ash, traveling down the flanks of a volcano or along the surface of the ground and produced by the explosive disintegration of viscous lava in a volcanic crater or by the explosive emission of gas-charged ash from a fissure or group of fissures.

BAJADA - A series of confluent alluvial fans along the base of a mountain range.

BASE, FERROUS AND PRECIOUS METALS - Those groups of metals which include copper, lead, zinc, tungsten, molybdenum, beryllium, manganese, antimony, arsenic, bismuth, tin, iron, nickel, lithium, thorium, uranium, vanadium, gold, silver, mercury, and the platinum group.

BASIN AND RANGE - A geomorphic province characterized by fault-block mountains and intervening basins.

BENCH - An accepted local usage for bajada.

BITTERBRUSH ZONE - The area where bitterbrush (Purshia tridentata or P. glandulosa) occurs. This is usually on benches and in canyon bottoms.

BROWSE - That part of the current leaf and twig growth of shrubs, woody vines and trees available for animal consumption.

CHAINING - The process of knocking over, for the purpose of extirpating, pinyon and juniper trees by means of dragging an anchor chain between two large caterpillar tractors.

CHERRYSTEM ROADS - Dead end roads into a WSA which form part of the boundaries of that WSA.

CLOSED DESIGNATION - Areas and trails where the use of motor vehicles is permanently or temporarily prohibited.

CRESTED WHEATGRASS SEEDINGS - Areas where the natural vegetation is removed or modified by chaining or plowing and then seeded with crested wheatgrass. This increases the productivity of the area to provide forage for livestock, wild horses and big game animals.

CULTURAL RESOURCE CATEGORIES;

Open Aboriginal Site (Pre-Historic) - Any unobstructed physical location, i.e., not caves or rock shelter, of Native American activities, either specific or general, relevant to that period of time prior to written history. The activity may range from specific, e.g. a quarry, to general, e.g. a permanent village. In general, Nevada written history is post A.D. 1850, but may be as early as the 1820's or as late as the 1870's.

Historic Sites - Any specific location which has physical evidence of human activities within the period of recorded history and which can be related to non-aboriginal peoples, i.e. Euro-Americans, Asians, Afro-Americans or any other post A.D. 1800 immigrant group. The evidence may range from a single item, such as a bottle, to mining related structures and features, roads, ranches, towns, etc.

Historic Aboriginal - Any specific location which either through intrinsic evidence or archival documentation or tradition can be identified with Native Americans, such as Shoshones or Paiutes, in the period of written history.

EXTRUSIVE ROCKS - Igneous rocks derived from magmas or magmatic materials poured out or ejected at the earth's surface.

FAULT BLOCK - A mass bounded on at least two opposite sides by faults.

FORAGE - All browse and herbaceous foods that are available to grazing animals. It may be grazed or harvested for feeding.

GRANDFATHERED USE - An authorized use taking place on the public lands as of the date of the enactment of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (October 21, 1976).

GRAZING PREFERENCE - A basis upon which permits and licenses are issued for grazing use. It is the total number of animal unit months of livestock grazing apportioned and attached to base property or water owned or controlled by a permittee or lessee.

HABITAT MANAGEMENT PLAN - A written and officially approved plan for a specific geographic area which identifies wildlife habitat and related objectives, establishes the sequence of actions for achieving objectives, and outlines procedures for evaluating accomplishments.

HERD MANAGEMENT AREA PLAN - A written program of action designed to protect, manage and control wild and free roaming horses and burros to maintain a natural ecological balance on the public lands.

HIGH ANGLE FAULT - A fault with a dip greater than 45°.

HIGH EROSION POTENTIAL WATERSHED - Watershed areas that are presently in a stable condition but which are subject to high rates of erosion if the native vegetation or topsoil is altered in any way. Deliniation is based on soil type, vegetative cover, root depth, slope, and climate.

INTRUSIVE ROCKS - A rock which consolidated from magma beneath the surface of the earth.

KIDDING GROUNDS - Areas used by female antelope to bear their young.

LICENSED USE - The portion of a permittees grazing preference that is used in a grazing season within an allotment and which is authorized on a grazing license.

MAAR VOLCANO - A crater formed by violent explosion and not accompanied by igneous extrusion.

MAGMATIC GASES - Gases associated with molten rock or magma.

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN - A land use plan for the public lands which provides a set of goals, objectives, and constraints for a specific planning area to guide the development of detailed plans for the management of each resource.

MINERAL POTENTIALS:

High Potential - High potential is assigned to areas that contain or are extensions of active or inactive properties which show evidence of ore, mineralization, and favorable geologic characteristics. All producing properties fall within this category.

Good Potential - Good potential is assigned to areas with several geologic characteristics indicative of mineralization, relatively lower economic value of past production, and similar environments but at greater distances from known ore and mineral occurrences. This category may include areas adjacent to known districts or in mineral belts.

Speculative Potential - Speculative potential is assigned to areas having some favorable geologic parameters and inferences based on geologic models and analogies to known favorable environments. Increasing depth of alluvial cover over areas of potential deposits is also a consideration in this category, except in the case of oil and gas potential.

Low Potential - Low potential is assigned to areas that are outside any construed favorable geologic and mineral trend projections or are buried by over 1500 meters of alluvium (except oil and gas).

MINING DISTRICT - A section of country usually designated by name and described or understood as being confined within certain natural boundaries, in which gold or silver or other minerals may be found in paying quantities.

MOUNTAIN BRUSH COMMUNITY - Describes a high elevation area, in mountainous terrain that is comprised of primarily brush species including service berry, mountain mahogany, wildrose, chokecherry, and snowberry.

MOUNTAIN GRASSLAND - Describes a high elevation area, in mountainous terrain that is comprised primarily of grass species such as bluegrasses, needlegrasses, fescues, and others.

MOUNTAIN MEADOW - Describes a high elevation area, in mountainous terrain that is comprised primarily of wet meadow sedges and grass species.

MULTIPLE USE - "...the management of the public lands and their various resource values so that they are utilized in the combination that will best meet the present and future needs of the American people; making the most judicious use of the land for some or all of these resources or related services over areas large enough to provide sufficient latitude for periodic adjustments in use to conform to changing needs and conditions; the use of some land for less than all of the re-

sources; a combination of balanced diverse resource uses that takes into account the long-term needs of future generations for renewable and nonrenewable resources, including, but not limited to, recreation, range, timber, minerals, watershed, wildlife and fish, and natural, scenic, scientific and historical values; and harmonious and coordinated management of the various resources without permanent impairment of the productivity of the land and the quality of the environment with consideration being given to the relative values of the resources and not necessarily to the combination of uses that will give the greatest economic return or the greatest unit output", (Section 103, Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976).

NATIONAL NATURAL LANDMARK - A specific area designated by the Secretary of the Interior which contains a representative example(s) of the nation's natural history, including terrestrial communities, aquatic communities, landforms, geological features, or habitats of native plant and animal species, possessing national significance in illustrating or interpreting the nation's natural heritage.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES - The official list, established by the Historic Preservation Act of 1966, of the nation's cultural resources worthy of preservation.

NONMETALLIC AND INDUSTRIAL MINERALS - Includes carbon, diamond, coal, bitumen, asphalt, boron, sulfur, rock salt, etc; lack the propertries of the metallic minerals, such as bright luster, hardness, density, and good conductors of heat and electricity. Rocks and minerals not produced as sources of metals but used rather for their own physical properties.

NORTHERN DESERT SHRUB COMMUNITY - A general term applied to the broad vegetative types inhabiting much of the intermountain cold desert shrub region. Typical plants include sagebrush, winterfat, budsage, and rabbitbrush. Several types of grasses are also present, including wheatgrasses, bottlebrush squirreltail, Indian ricegrass, galleta grass, needle-and-thread grass and Great Basin wildrye.

OPEN DESIGNATION - Areas on public lands where motor vehicles may be operated, subject only to standard operating regulations.

PATENTED MINING CLAIM - A mining claim where the claimant has received title to the minerals and usually the surface by fulfilling the requirements of the applicable mining laws

PERMITTEE - One who holds a permit to graze livestock on state, federal, or certain privately owned lands.

PINYON AND JUNIPER ENCROACHMENT - The invasion of pinyon pine and juniper trees into a dominant brushland area where pinyon pine and juniper have not previously occurred or in an area where the dominant brushland is essential to the sustenance of wildlife species.

PUBLIC LAND - Vacant, unappropriated, and unreserved lands which have never left Federal ownership; also, lands in Federal ownership which were obtained by the Government in exchange for public lands or for timber on public lands. Land administered by the Bureau of Land Management.

RANGELAND MONITORING PROGRAM - A program designed to measure changes in plant composition,

ground cover, animal populations, and climatic conditions on the public rangeland. Vegetation studies will be used to monitor changes in rangeland condition and determine the reason for any changes that are occurring. The vegetation studies consist of actual use, utilization, trend, and climatic conditions.

RESURGED CALDRON - A caldera into which new molten material was emplaced following its initial formation.

RIPARIAN COMMUNITIES - Vegetative communities found in association with either open water or water close to the surface; includes meadows, aspen, and other trees and shrubs in association with streams and other water sources.

ROAD - Vehicle routes which have been improved and maintained by mechanical means to insure relatively regular and continuous use.

SAGEBRUSH ZONE - An area where at least one species of sagebrush occurs and is the predominant species (includes Artemesia tridentata, A. nova, A. arbuscula, A. frigida, A. cana and others).

SCOPING PROCESS - An early and open process for determining the scope of issues to be addressed and for identifying the significant issues related to a proposed action.

SEASONAL DEPENDENCE - The dependence of a particular wildlife species on a particular piece of habitat for specific life requirements during a specific season of the year. For example, desert bighorn sheep may have a seasonal dependance on specific spring sources or water holes during the dryest season of the year.

SHEAR ZONE - A zone in which shearing has occurred on a large scale so that the rock is crushed and brecciated.

SPECIES, ENDANGERED - An animal or plant whose prospects of survival and reproduction are in immediate jeopardy, and as is further defined by The Endangered Species Act of 1973.

SPECIES, THREATENED - Any species which is likely to become an endangered species within the forseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range, and as is further defined by the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

SPRING CONCENTRATION AREA - Areas within a particular species habitat that provide essential needs to that species during the spring. These areas are usually smaller in proportion to the overall habitat and result in a higher concentration of species during the spring.

STATE SELECTION LANDS - Federal lands chosen by and granted to the State under the provisions of its Statehood Act.

SUSTAINED YIELD - "...the achievement and maintenance in perpetuity of a high-level annual or regular periodic output of the various renewable resources of the public lands consistent with multiple use", (Section 103, Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976).

THRUST FAULT - A fault that is characterized by a low angle of inclination with reference to a horizontal plane.

TONOPAH INDIVIDUAL EXPERIMENTAL STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM - An experimental program to be implemented on the public rangelands in the Tonopah Resource Area. The program would provide incentives to or rewards for the holders of grazing permits and leases whose effective management results in an

improvement of range conditions on lands under permit or lease. The program shall explore innovative grazing management systems and concepts.

UTILITY CORRIDOR - A corridor through an area in which all utility transmission facilities, both existing and proposed, are located resulting in less area disturbed and a minimum of environmental damage.

VEGETATIVE MANIPULATION PROJECTS - Actions taken which alter the existing natural plant communities to achieve the goals of management in a particular area. There are several ways in which vegetation can be altered: (1) with fires, (2) mechanically, which includes chaining, plowing or crushing, (3) chemically, and (4) biologically.

WATER BASE LIVESTOCK OPERATION - A livestock operation that uses livestock waters which it controls to qualify for a grazing preference on public rangeland.

WAYS - A vehicle route established and maintained solely by the passage of motor vehicles.

WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS- Identified by Congress in the 1964 Wilderness Act: namely, size, naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation, and supplemental values such as geological, archaeological, historical, ecological, scenic, or other features. It is required that the area possess at least 5,000 acres or more of contiguous public land or be of a size to make practical its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition; be substantially natural or generally appear to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature with the imprint of man being substantially unnoticeable; and have either outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation. Congress said a wilderness area may have supplemental values, which include ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value. However, the presence or absence of supplemental values could not make or eliminate an area for wilderness designation.

WILDERNESS MANAGEMENT POLICY - This policy document prescribes the general objectives, policies, and specific activity guidance applicable to all designated BLM wilderness areas. Specific management objectives, requirements, and decisions implementing administrative practices and visitor activities in individual wilderness areas are developed and described in the wilderness management plan for each unit.

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA (WSA) - A roadless area which has been found to have wilderness characteristics.

WILDERNESS VALUES - Includes the wilderness characteristics and multiple resource benefits of an area.

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